THE ZENANA

MINOR POEMS

L. E. L.

WITH A MEMOIR BY EMMA ROBERTS.

"ALAS! HOPE IS NOT PROPHECY,—WE DREAM,
BUT RARELY DOES THE GLAD FULFILMENT COME:
WE LEAVE OUR LAND—AND WE RETURN NO MORE!"

L. E. L.

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MEMOIR OF

L.E.L.

Few there are who could hear the sad tidings of the death of that highly gifted creature, whose exhaustless verse seemed to fill the atmosphere with song, without feelings of deep and painful emotion; but to her private and personal friends, who were many and true-hearted, the blow was appalling. To descant upon the genius of L. E. L.—to paint the rare and brilliant qualities of a mind so richly stored with all that could dazzle and delight—would require a much more able pen: and there are many amongst the circle of her friends and admirers who will doubtless fulfil an office to which I am scarcely adequate. Though unwilling to decline a duty, which might have been less faithfully exercised by those who were not equally well acquainted with all the circumstances of L. E. L.'s life, the task now devolving upon me is one of the most painful nature,

not only in consequence of the affliction in which the late melancholy event has plunged me, but from the mournful conviction that I cannot do justice to the friend that I have lost. I cannot depict her to the world as she existed, in all her wit, gaiety, and brightness; or show, as they merit to be shown, those endearing qualities of the heart, that finely constituted mind, which rendered her so precious to all, who, like myself, had known her intimately from the first period of her girlhood. Unpretending, however, and imperfect as the present sketch will be found, as the record of one who loved its lamented subject with the fondest affection, it can scarcely fail to be acceptable to that large portion of the community with whom her works are so deservedly popular.

Letitia Elizabeth Landon, the descendant of a family of ancient date, and of the highest respectability, was the niece of the late Very Rev. Dr. Landon, Dean of Exeter, for many years Provost of Worcester College, Oxford, whose death was announced nearly about the same day on which intelligence was brought of her own decease. While she was yet an infant, the parents of L. E. L. removed from the house at Chelsea, in which she was born, to a country residence,

Trevor Park, and here were spent the days of her early childhood, amid scenes which she has vividly depicted in various portions of her later works.

The affection with which L. E. L. clung to the memory of these old haunts, her regret at the changes which had come over them, obliterating all traces of the home endeared to her by a thousand recollections, formed some of the numerous proofs of the enduring nature of her attachments. There was to her more of poetry in London, and in large cities generally, than is usually admitted by highly imaginative persons; but notwithstanding her preference of the town, no one could luxuriate with truer enjoyment in wild and solitary places, or more thoroughly appreciate the beauties of nature. It is scarcely possible to say at what period of her life L. E. L. began to write, for she composed from her infancy. The old ballads and romances, all the snatches of song, and traditionary lore, the literary recreations of the nursery, stored her mind with materials, which were promptly employed in the formation of numerous fanciful structures; and long before her tiny fingers could shape the letters of the words, she had composed volumes of poetry. To be shut up in a dark room for any childish misdemea-

nour, was to her no punishment, for she speedily peopled it with glorious forms, and transported herself to some paradise of her own. It may, indeed, be said, that Kilmeny, the charming creation of the Ettrick shepherd's brightest fancy, was not more completely domesticated in Fairy-land, than the infant genius who fled to it in imagination from all her little troubles.

L. E. L. at this time read with avidity every thing that came in her way, giving the preference, of course, to poetry and romance, and making romances out of graver works, travels especially, which she filled up with splendid visions, every object being viewed with a poet's eye. She gathered in this manner immense stores of information; and the germs of more abstruse and learned studies, which as she grew older engaged her attention, were acquired at an age usually exclusively directed to the perusal of gilt picture books. A brother, nearly her own age, shared the sports and studies of Trevor Park; and never was affection more warm, deep, and devoted than that which subsisted between these strongly attached relatives. Amid many others, the beautiful poem which she addressed to her brother, and which will be found in the present col-

lection, written originally to illustrate a portrait of Captain Cook, affords a charming and touching transcript of her feelings, both at this early period, and in after years.

In conversation with her familiar friends, L. E. L. loved to dwell upon scenes which awakened her first burst of song; and I remember, two or three years ago, when about to pay a visit to some friends in the neighbourhood of East Barnet, she charged me to make a pilgrimage to the spot which was once Trevor Park, and not fail to think of her as I stood among the gravestones of the village churchyard. While still a mere child, L. E. L. began to publish, and her poetry immediately attracted attention. Living completely in a world of her own, constructed from materials found in those agreeable fictions which had been her study and her solace, she rushed fearlessly into print, not dreaming for a moment, that verses which were poured forth like the waters from a fountain, gushing, as she has beautifully expressed it, of their own sweet will, could ever provoke stern or harsh criticism. Neither was she at all prepared for the mistaken idea produced by the plaintive nature of her song. Love, such as she had found it in the old chivalric time, was her chosen

theme, and in depicting its effect upon the female heart, she maintained a melancholy creed, giving to the greater number of her effusions a pensive cast of thought, and making all her stories of true love end unhappily. It was perhaps the natural gaiety of her disposition, which occasioned her to indulge in the plaints and sorrows of her somewhat mournful song, when her spirits were exhausted by the lively flow of conversation, and wanted repose. It need scarcely be said, since the fact is so well established, that it is not the writers of the gayest and most sprightly works, who are always blessed with the most cheerful temperaments; comic effusions proving often the relief of minds oppressed with many cares; while the mirthful and the happy as frequently abandon themselves to what may be truly denominated the luxury of wo. While dwelling with apparently earnest tenderness upon the sorrows of love, its disappointments and treacheries, L. E. L. identified herself with the beings of her fancy, lamenting, frequently in the first person, over miseries which she had never felt, and to which she was by no means likely to be subjected, since both then and subsequently, she manifested an almost extraordinary want of susceptibility, upon all occasions when attempts were made upon her heart.

The wonderful precocity of her intellect rendered it scarcely possible for those readers, beyond the then narrow circle of her acquaintance, to imagine that her poems were the production of a girl who had not yet left off her pinafores, and whose only notion of a lover was embodied in a knight wearing the brightest armour and the whitest of plumes. Such, however, was the fact, and this beau ideal preserved her from the tender passion for many a long year; none of her admirers, and they were numerous, reaching the high standard erected in her own imagination. While generally supposed to be the pining victim of unrequited love, her heart remained untouched, its overflowing tenderness being lavished upon the faithless heroes of her own creation.

At this, as well as at every other period of her life, previous to her quitting England, L. E. L. was surrounded by a small circle of female friends, living under the same roof with her, and to whom all her thoughts and feelings were well known. Being perfectly aware of her entire freedom from any affair of the heart, these friends were sometimes amused, and sometimes provoked, by the various reports which gained universal credit. At this era of her existence, the occasional

gloom which was wont to tinge her views of life, appearing only in the melancholy tone of her song, L. E. L. a bright, blithe being, affectionate and glad, taking pleasure in all that pleased her associates, delighted them by her talents, and attached them by her amiability. The loss of her father while she was still a very young girl, proved her earliest domestic affliction; and heavily it fell upon her. Mr. Landon had been a kind and most indulgent parent, and his daughter mourned his loss long and deeply. The affectionate tribute which she paid to his memory, in some very touching verses published in her poem of the Troubadour, may be cited as a faithful record of her filial piety towards one whose death was a severe misfortune.

L. E. L. from this period devoted herself to a life of literature; finding, under every circumstance, so much delight in the outpouring of her thoughts and feelings, as fully to compensate for the trials, great as they are, which every author, however distinguished and successful, must encounter. The necessity of fulfilling engagements to the day—of writing against time, often under the infliction of indisposition or mental anxiety, form some of the numerous drawbacks which those who cannot command literary leisure experience;

with which she was frequently compelled to combat, though borne with cheerfulness, could not fail to produce occasional depression of spirits, and to give to her first views of the realities of life, somewhat of a melancholy character.

L. E. L. totally destitute of what is called worldly wisdom, unconscious of a thought or feeling that needed disguise, and unapprehensive of any misinterpretation of her words or actions, was not prepared for the strictures which in some instances were certainly provoked by envy at her success. She felt all that was unkind very keenly, but, conscious that it was not merited, the effect was transient, or left no lasting impression upon her mind. There was, however, a degree of perhaps constitutional irritability about L. E. L.'s disposition, which though it never injured a temper remarkable for its sweetness, was manifested in various ways: when highly excited, sometimes from no other cause than the workings of her own imagination, she suffered from a sensation of atmospheric oppression, which, notwithstanding any inclemency of the weather, could only be relieved by rapid motion in the open air. She would in this manner pace for hours in the garden, or, feeling that too narrow, seek a wider space. At other

times, when the fit of inspiration, for such it might be deemed, came on, she would surprise her companions with some sudden burst of startling eloquence, filled perhaps with bitter fancies, and bearing little or no analogy to the conversation which had preceded it. Her mind always active, seeking to disburden itself in a flow of words which, when she had no other auditors, were uttered to the winds.

Though enduring illness with fortitude, the fine susceptibility of her nervous system rendered her very impatient under pain; she seemed to suffer more than others from spasms or cramps, or any transient attack of the kind, to which we are all more or less subject, and has alarmed her companions frequently by a sudden paroxysm, for which the cause subsequently alleged seemed quite inadequate. These are trifling circumstances to record; but the tragical nature of her death renders every point, however minute, which tends to throw light upon her character, of great importance: judging from my own acquaintance with her, I should say, that she was exactly the person who would fly to the most desperate remedy for relief from pain, but unless in some moment of actual delirium, brought on by excessive bodily anguish, she never wilfully would

have destroyed herself. I feel that I have some right to offer this opinion, since I have stood at her side when her mental sufferings have been so intense, her afflictions of so trying a nature, numerous causes combining at once to overpower her with a weight almost too heavy to bear, that, could distress of mind have driven her to so fatal an act, I cannot but think that it would have been committed long ago. These trials, however, refer to a later period of life.

No one could better bear to be told of faults; whether connected with her writings, or merely personal, she either readily admitted, or playfully defended them, and nothing could exceed the amiable manner in which she accommodated herself to the ways of those with whom she resided. The great delight of her life seemed to be that of obliging others, anticipating the wants and wishes of her friends in the kindest and most considerate manner, and continually lavishing gifts upon them, which were rich or trifling, according to her means, and always rendered valuable by some pleasing trait of character connected with the occasion. While thus generous, she was also scrupulously just in all her pecuniary dealings, and simple in her own habits and tastes; nothing was spent in self-indulgence.

A record of L. E. L's personal expenses would have astonished many who were acquainted with the amount of the sums which she earned, and knew how often she overtasked herself in their acquirement. A better acquaintance with habits of business would probably have saved her from the sad necessity which was so frequently injurious to her health; but had her life been spared, she would have been amply repaid for the exertions and the sacrifices made so cheerfully for those she loved.

As a companion and friend, under every mood and fancy, L. E. L. was most interesting, most delightful: a year, one of the happiest of my life, spent under the same roof with her, cemented a friendship formed long before, and which never suffered deviation or diminution. It may indeed be said, to L. E. L.'s honour, that she retained, to the last moment of existence all the friends thus domesticated with her, those who knew her most intimately being the most fondly attached. No one ever possessed a stronger phalanx of high-minded and devoted associates, who, however differing in rank, pursuits, and, it may be added, tastes, all united in doing justice to her merits! her whole life, as it has been previously stated, being spent in

a domestic circle of her own sex, who were cognizant of all her actions, and between whom no cloud ever arose. With the exception of an excursion to Paris, made with a lady of the highest rank and influence, her time was passed either with her relatives in the country, or under the roof of friends in London, by whom she will long be remembered with feelings of love and regret.

L. E. L. secluded herself much less from those with whom she lived in domestic intercourse, than could have been expected from the multiplicity of her literary undertakings, and the multifarious nature of her studies. She not only read, but thoroughly understood, and entered into the merits of every book that came out; while it is merely necessary to refer to her printed works, to calculate the amount of information which she had gathered from preceding authors. The history and literature of all ages and all countries were familiar to her; nor did she acquire any portion of her knowledge in a superficial manner; the extent of her learning, and the depth of her research, manifesting themselves in publications which do not bear her name; her claim to them being only known to friends, who, like myself, had access to her desk, and with whom she knew the secret might be safely trusted. Witty, fanciful,

acute, and discriminating, how greatly was the pleasure of reading enhanced, when she perused the same page; never was there a more kind or generous critic, one who so instantaneously detected the beauties of a work, and so thoroughly enjoyed them. The warm and graceful homage which she paid to talent of every kind, the delight which she took in the literary triumphs of her contemporaries, and the encouragement which she gave to those who required it, were as unaffected as they were amiable. She had no exclusive tastes, every department of literature affording gratification to a mind which delighted as much in the flowers beneath her feet, as in the stars that made the heaven above her glorious.

L. E. L. possessed a keen relish for the ridiculous, and frequently amused herself by putting grave things in a ludicrous point of view; but there was nothing ill-natured or unkind in her satire, all her errors in that way being those of thoughtlessness. It would be difficult to name her favourite authors, there were so many to which she recurred with never-ceasing delight. Few things pleased her better than to get hold of some old by-gone work, which had not been part or parcel of her juvenile studies. Well do I remember our sending

to Hookham's for a box of long-neglected novels, and the eagerness with which she perused the antiquated volumes, though I can only recollect the title of one, and the impression which it made upon her—Sydney Biddulph.

All works of art afforded L. E. L. great enjoyment; though not using the pencil herself, she saw every thing with a painter's eye, making pictures in her mind, and being struck, even in the crowded streets, with any fine effect of light or shade falling upon picturesque architecture. She was fond, in her poems, of suggesting subjects for the sister art, and many noble works might be executed from the glowing delineations of her ever-vivid pen. Music she did not profess to like, but no one more thoroughly enjoyed that which appealed to the mind rather than the ear. I have been with her to the Opera before she had acquired a taste for Italian music, and when we had some difficulty in persuading her to accompany us; and though at first inattentive, have seen her quit her seat, chosen in a remote corner, and kneel down in the front of the box, with eyes dilating and bosom heaving, as she gave her whole soul to Pasta. Those, too, who have observed how delightedly she listened to Mr. Lover's songs, and how anxiously she expressed her wish that he would give popularity

to the neglected airs which soothed her childhood, could not doubt that her fine perceptions extended to music, as well as to other emanations of genius. Much of L. E. L's childish miseries resulted from the too common absurdity of forcing every young lady to play upon the piano; but though she emancipated herself as speedily as possible from a species of drudgery which she found very irksome, she took some pains, at a subsequent period of her life, to learn a few sets of quadrilles, in order that she might be qualified to perform the part of musician while her friends were dancing; and of such traits of kindness was her whole life made up.

The conversation of L. E. L. was as brilliant as her writings, shining upon all occasions which called it forth, not merely in society where she was the idol, but as the solitary companion of the rural walk, or fire-side, always ready to amuse and be amused, and avenging any little quarrel with the world by the utterance of some misanthropic sentiment, the only ebullition of temper she was ever known to indulge. L. E. L. though she could not be unconscious of her own powers, was the least exacting person imaginable, she had no ambitious feelings to gratify, no desire to appear at the head of a coterie, or to parade herself in her literary

character. She was delighted and gratified when sought out by men or women of genius, but she never put herself forward in any way to court applause. Neither did she set more than their proper value upon the distinctions of rank and wealth, or avail herself of the numerous advances made by parties moving in the highest circles. Many of her intimate friends belonged to the most distinguished class of society, but these were endeared to her by circumstances independent of their position and influence, and would also have been her friends had they moved in a less exalted sphere. She never cared for mere acquaintance, those who approached her were either all, or nothing; and her indifference in this respect wounded the self-love of many who were desirous to add so great an attraction to their parties. Nothing could be more unpremeditated than the brilliant displays which L. E. L. so frequently made of her conversational powers, which indeed were upon many occasions wasted upon people very incapable of appreciating them, being called forth by some sudden impulse of her own mind. When in company with persons of congenial tastes and feelings, she never failed; but in large assemblies, in which expectation had been highly raised, a considerable degree

of disappointment has been experienced, either by her remaining silent, or, in consequence of some whim, exhibiting herself in a character perfectly foreign to her own, expressing sentiments, and maintaining opinions, which gave those who saw nothing beyond the surface, an idea that she must in reality be a very unintellectual person.

Though exceedingly indifferent concerning all that related to the mere vanities of worldly intercourse, and not caring to number lords and ladies amongst her acquaintance, for the sake of their titles alone; L. E. L. was by no means insensible to the more flattering testimonies of the esteem in which she was held by those whose good opinion conferred honour. During her canvass for the election of her brother, the Rev. Whittington Landon, to the Secretaryship of the Literary Fund, the gratifying letters which she received from noblemen and gentlemen, distinguished alike for talent, character, and station, were duly appreciated by one, who was herself always so ready to acknowledge, and pay homage to merit of every kind. It is said, and there is no reason to doubt the statement, that upon the occasion of this election, a cabinet council was broken up some minutes before the usual time, for the

purpose of enabling several of the ministers to go down, in person, to vote for Mr. Landon, who, though in every respect most eligible to the office, certainly owed his appointment to the high estimation in which his sister was universally held. Upon the accession of the Queen, many of Miss Landon's friends suggested the propriety of her being presented at court, strongly advising her, at the same time, to employ the interest which she so evidently possessed, in an endeavour to obtain a pension from a government liberal in its patronage of literary talent. But while straining every nerve to procure the advancement in life of one dear to her, she was careless concerning her own; and could not be persuaded to take a step which had only personal advantage for its object. The opportunity was the more favourable, in consequence of the general admiration accorded at the time, to the beautiful verses addressed to the Princess Victoria upon her coming of age, published as a "Birth-day Tribute," which, it is known, had reached the eye of the Queen.

L. E. L. could not be, strictly speaking, called handsome; her eyes being the only good feature in a countenance, which was, however, so animated, and lighted up with such intellectual expression, as to be exceedingly

attractive. Gay and piquant, her clear complexion, dark hair, and eyes, rendered her, when in health and spirits, a sparkling brunette; and those who, from the style of her poetry expected a sentimental cast of countenance, pensive, and full of tender thought, could scarcely believe that this lively girl, for such from her youthful appearance she seemed to be, was the author of those mournful elegies which had impressed them with very different notions.

The prettiness of L. E. L., though generally acknowledged, was not talked about; and many persons, on their first introduction, were as pleasingly surprised as the Ettrick Shepherd, who, gazing upon her with great admiration, exclaimed "I did na think ye had been sae bonny." Her figure was slight, and beautifully proportioned, with little hands and feet; and these personal advantages, added to her kind and endearing manners, rendered her exceedingly fascinating. Though upon first discarding her pinafores, L. E. L. was rather careless about her dress, she afterwards manifested a very proper and womanly regard for her personal appearance, attiring herself with great elegance and taste, and always, when left entirely to her own judgment, with perfect simplicity. I remember assisting at her toilette

for a *bal costumé*, when we dressed her as Perdita, in the style of an Arcadian shepherdess, with a white chip hat and white roses; and upon this occasion she was more admired than the belle and beauty of the room. Bright and intellectual as she was, it appeared to us that Shakspeare would have been charmed with such a representative of his sylvan princess.

The letters of L. E. L. were exceedingly characteristic, always written with great rapidity, and without the slightest premeditation. Distinguished by the easy gaiety which marked her conversation, the opinions, criticisms, and remarks, with which they were interspersed, were so lively and just, as almost to induce a wish that she should have had no other employment than that of chronicling passing events, and painting the form and features of the times. Notwithstanding the pressure of other avocations, she wrote frequently, and at length, to a rather numerous list of correspondents. Her letters, if collected, would make a most interesting volume; but a doubt upon my part, whether, without the sanction of the author, confidential communications of the kind should be made public, has prevented me from availing myself of those in my possession.

It is impossible, in writing about L. E. L., not to

revert every moment to the affectionate kindness of her disposition, which extended even to things inanimate; while her growing partiality for every work that she undertook was very remarkable. In commencing the Drawing Room Scrap-Book, she looked upon it as a mere collection of engravings, to which it was no easy task to give any poetical interest; and her first effusions, beautiful as they were, being written under this impression, were less striking than those which succeeded. The work, however, became familiar and captivating; and she bestowed upon it the produce of the richest mines of her thought. In her preface to the volume for 1839 she observes, "For the last few years the Drawing Room Scrap-Book has been the cherished record of my poetical impressions, and my only poetical work; and I grew gradually to look forward to June and July, as recalling my first keen delight in composition." She had for some time previous to her departure from England, contemplated a republication of her favourite poems, selected from this cherished child of her fancy;[a] and now that the task

[a] In one of her letters to Mr. Fisher, urging their republication, she says, "Some of my very best poems have appeared in the *Drawing Room Scrap Book*."

has devolved upon me, I feel a melancholy pleasure in marking those which had been the subjects of conversation between us. She seems indeed to live again in the glowing pages of her song; and all who knew her intimately, and were acquainted with the tone and temper of her mind, must take a mournful interest in tracing throughout her works the thoughts and feelings to which she so frequently gave utterance, recalling moments of confidential intercourse, trifles forming the base of many a glorious superstructure, in which, directly or indirectly, the interlocutor may claim a part. Such memorials are of continual recurrence, and they were peculiarly delightful to me upon the perusal of the volumes published during an absence of three or four years from England, in which, on my return, I found old conversations recorded, and numerous forgotten hints rising like ancient friends in every page. It was delightful also to trace the maturer views of a mind always progressing. With a more intimate acquaintance with the world, and a deeper knowledge of human nature, all that was merely fanciful gave place to thoughts of higher elevation and to sounder deductions; and as she appealed less to the imagination, she spoke more strongly to the heart.

The gaiety that to the last formed a striking characteristic of L. E. L.'s disposition, was at this later period of her career strongly contrasted by the tone of despondence which continued to pervade her works; those, however, in contemplation, or in progress, on her departure from England, were constructed more in accordance with the general taste, and would have exhibited far less gloomy pictures of human life. Her graceful deference to the representations of the friends whom she knew to be warmly interested in her literary reputation, inducing her to give up her own peculiar fancies. Though latterly her health had been impaired by very severe attacks of illness, the moment that she rallied she became as gay and as cheerful as ever; nor did she ever appear to entertain any misgivings respecting the consequences of a residence in the deleterious climate to which she was bound.

Without in the slightest degree desiring to intrude opinions concerning the chances of happiness offered in my lamented friend's marriage, it seems to be due to Mr. Maclean to say, that as the governor of Cape Coast Castle, he has distinguished himself by every trait that could do honour to the station which he held, and that he possesses a wide circle of friends to whom he is

endeared by all those qualities which can most justly recommend him to their esteem. If Miss Landon still retained her prejudice in favour of heroes, the perusal of Mr. Maclean's despatches was well calculated to awaken the first strong feeling. These documents can scarcely fail to inspire the highest sentiments of respect and admiration for the comprehensive mind, and daring spirit, which, with such inefficient means, could have achieved so much; while a more intimate acquaintance, must also deepen the impression in his favour: it can therefore be no subject of surprise that one who entertained so exalted a notion of the talent necessary to constitute the statesman and the soldier, should become unaffectedly and devotedly attached to him. No one could better appreciate than L. E. L. the high and sterling qualities of her lover's character, his philanthropic and unceasing endeavours to improve the condition of the natives of Africa; the noble manner in which he interfered to prevent the horrid waste of human life by the barbarian princes in his neighbourhood; and the chivalric energy with which he strove to put an end to the slave-trade. L. E. L. esteemed Mr. Maclean the more, in consequence of his not approaching her with the adulation with which

her ear had been accustomed, to satiety; she was gratified by the manly nature of his attachment. Possessing, in her estimation, merits of the highest order, the influence which he gained over her promised, in the opinion of those who were best acquainted with the docility of her temper, and her ready acquiescence with the wishes of those she loved, to ensure lasting happiness. Before he would permit Miss Landon to enter into an engagement with him, Mr. Maclean, in the most honourable manner, stated all the privations incident upon a residence at Cape Coast Castle. No one could be more desirous that she should give the gravest consideration to the step she was about to take, or could more strongly impress upon her mind the magnitude of the sacrifice which she would make in accompanying him to the scene of his government. Ample time was permitted for her decision upon this most important point; while many of her friends endeavoured to dissuade her from a purpose in which she must encounter the dangers of an unhealthy climate, and be subjected to the scarcely less trying evils to be endured in a remote colony; but she never for an instant wavered. With a perfect knowledge of the kind of life she would be obliged to

lead, the entire seclusion from the society to which she had been accustomed, and the chance of not having a single female companion to cheer her solitude, she determined upon sharing the fortunes of the man she loved.

During an engagement of several months, Miss Landon possessed ample opportunities of becoming acquainted with the temper and disposition of her affianced husband, and she had daily before her the means of judging whether she could be happy when domesticated with him upon a foreign and barbarous coast, a great portion of his time occupied by duties which would necessarily keep them apart, and dependent entirely upon her own resources for amusement. It may be added, that nothing of importance connected with Mr. Maclean's former residence in Africa was concealed from Miss Landon. Not being in possession of any other evidence than that which has appeared in the public prints, concerning the particulars of Mrs. Maclean's short residence at Cape Coast Castle, I cannot support my own opinion that its melancholy conclusion was wholly accidental, by stronger proofs. The regard which I entertain for the memory of my friend, renders it, however, my duty

to state a few circumstances, not generally known, relating to her marriage, which at least will show that she quitted England a gay and happy bride, oppressed with no other sorrow than that which was occasioned by the pain of parting with her friends.

Being desirous to avoid the bustle and parade of a public wedding, and the necessity which custom demands of seclusion from society, which would have abridged L. E. L.'s enjoyment of a visit paid to a family to whom she was strongly attached, the marriage ceremony was performed privately, in the presence of a few of the relatives of the bride, who returned to the hospitable mansion, which she only quitted for the purpose of plighting her vows; remaining with her friends until her departure from England, Mr. Maclean not taking up his residence under the same roof, even after the marriage had been publicly announced. During this interval, those who were in the habit of seeing L. E. L. drew happy auguries from the gaiety and even joyousness which she manifested, the effect produced by the new hopes now cherished, being so striking, as to be universally remarked. At our last interview, a very short time before her departure, she assured me of her perfect happiness with

a sincerity of look and manner which could not be doubted, and the impression thus left on my mind was one of the most cheerful nature. On the 1st of January, 1839, the newspapers announced the sudden death of Mrs. George Maclean at Cape Coast Castle; and these melancholy tidings were followed by the report of an inquest which sate upon the body, and which attributed the fatal event to incaution in taking hydrocyanic acid while suffering under an attack of spasms.

No further light has since been thrown on the melancholy fate of my early friend.

E. R.

The publishers add to the foregoing account, the following most affecting letter, dated the very morning of Mrs. Maclean's death, which was found in her desk, and read at the inquest.

"Cape Coast Castle, Oct. 15.

"My dearest Marie,

"I cannot but write you a brief account how I enact the part of a feminine Robinson Crusoe. I must say, in itself, the place is infinitely superior to all I ever dreamed of. The castle is a fine building—the rooms excellent. I do not suffer from heat; insects there are few or none, and I am in excellent health. The solitude, except an occasional dinner, is absolute; from seven in the morning till seven when we dine, I never see Mr. Maclean, and rarely any one else. We were welcomed by a series of dinners, which I am glad are over—for it is very awkward to be the only lady—still the great kindness with which I have been treated, and the very pleasant manners of many of the gentlemen, made me feel it as little as possible. Last week we had a visit from Captain Castle of the Pylades. His story is very melancholy. He married six months

before he left England, to one of the beautiful Miss Hills, Sir John Hill's daughter, and she died just as he received orders to return home. We also had a visit from Colonel Bosch, the Dutch governor, a most gentlemanly-like man. But fancy how awkward the next morning; I cannot induce Mr. Maclean to rise, and I have to make breakfast, and do the honours of adieu to him and his officers—white plumes, mustachios, and all. I think I never felt more embarrassed. I have not yet felt the want of society the least. I do not wish to form new friends, and never does a day pass without thinking most affectionately of my old ones. On three sides we are surrounded by the sea. I like the perpetual dash on the rocks; one wave comes up after another, and is for ever dashed in pieces, like human hopes, that only swell to be disappointed. We advance—up springs the shining froth of love or hope—"a moment white, and gone for ever." The land-view, with its cocoa and palm trees, is very striking—it is like a scene in the Arabian Nights. Of a night the beauty is very remarkable; the sea is of a silvery purple, and the moon deserves all that has been said in her favour. I have only once been out of the fort by daylight, and then was delighted. The salt-

lakes were first dyed a deep crimson by the setting sun, and as we returned they seemed a faint violet in the twilight, just broken by a thousand stars, while before us was the red beacon-light. The chance of sending this letter is a very sudden one, or I should have ventured to write to General Fagan, to whom I beg the very kindest regards. Dearest, do not forget me. Pray write to me, 'Mrs. George Maclean, Cape Coast Castle; care of Messrs. Forster and Smith, 5, New City Chambers, Bishopsgate-street.' Write about yourself; nothing else half so much interests your affectionate,

"L. E. MACLEAN."

THE ZENANA.

AN EASTERN TALE.

WHAT is there that the world hath not
Gathered in yon enchanted spot?
Where, pale, and with a languid eye,
The fair Sultana listlessly
Leans on her silken couch, and dreams
Of mountain airs, and mountain streams.
Sweet though the music float around,
It wants the old familiar sound;

And fragrant though the flowers are breathing,
From far and near together wreathing,
They are not those she used to wear,
Upon the midnight of her hair.—

She's very young, and childhood's days
With all their old remembered ways,
The empire of her heart contest
With love, that is so new a guest;
When blushing with her Murad near,
Half timid bliss, half sweetest fear,
E'en the beloved past is dim,
Past, present, future, merge in him.
But he, the warrior and the chief,
His hours of happiness are brief;
And he must leave Nadira's side
To woo and win a ruder bride;

Sought, sword in hand and spur on heel,
The fame, that weds with blood and steel.
And while from Delhi far away,
His youthful bride pines through the day,
Weary and sad: thus when again
He seeks to bind love's loosen'd chain;
He finds the tears are scarcely dry
  Upon a cheek whose bloom is faded,
The very flush of victory
  Is, like the brow he watches, shaded.
A thousand thoughts are at her heart,
  His image paramount o'er all,
Yet not all his, the tears that start,
  As mournful memories recall
Scenes of another home, which yet
That fond young heart can not forget.
She thinks upon that place of pride,
Which frowned upon the mountain's side;

While round it spread the ancient plain,
Her steps will never cross again.
And near those mighty temples stand,
The miracles of mortal hand,
Where, hidden from the common eye,
The past's long buried secrets lie,
Those mysteries of the first great creed,
Whose mystic fancies were the seed
Of every wild and vain belief,
That held o'er man their empire brief,
And turned beneath a southern sky,
All that was faith to poetry.
Hence had the Grecian fables birth,
And wandered beautiful o'er earth;
Till every wood, and stream, and cave,
Shelter to some bright vision gave:
For all of terrible and strange,
That from those gloomy caverns sprung,

From Greece received a graceful change,
That spoke another sky and tongue,
A finer eye, a gentler hand,
Than in their native Hindoo land.

'Twas thence Nadira came, and still
Her memory kept that lofty hill;
The vale below, her place of birth,
That one charmed spot, her native earth.
Still haunted by that early love,
Which youth can feel, and youth alone;
An eager, ready, tenderness,
To all its after-life unknown.
When the full heart its magic flings,
Alike o'er rare and common things,
The dew of morning's earliest hour,
Which swells but once from leaf and flower,

From the pure life within supplied,
A sweet but soon exhausted tide.

There falls a shadow on the gloom,
There steals a light step through the room,
Gentle as love, that, though so near,
No sound hath caught the list'ning ear.
A moment's fond watch o'er her keeping,
Murad beholds Nadira weeping;
He who to win her lightest smile,
Had given his heart's best blood the while.
She turned—a beautiful delight
Has flushed the pale one into rose,
Murad, her love, returned to-night,
Her tears, what recks she now of those?
Dried in the full heart's crimson ray,
Ere he can kiss those tears away—

And she is seated at his feet,
Too timid his dear eyes to meet;
But happy; for she knows whose brow
Is bending fondly o'er her now.
And eager, for his sake, to hear
The records red of sword and spear,
For his sake feels the colour rise,
His spirit kindle in her eyes,
Till her heart beating joins the cry
Of Murad, and of Victory.

City of glories now no more,
His camp extends by Bejapore,
Where the Mahratta's haughty race
Has won the Moslem conqueror's place;
A bolder prince now fills the throne,
And he will struggle for his own.

" And yet," he said, " when evening falls
Solemn above those mouldering walls,
Where the mosques cleave the starry air,
Deserted at their hour of prayer,
And rises Ibrahim's lonely tomb,
'Mid weed-grown shrines, and ruined towers,
All marked with that eternal gloom
Left by the past to present hours.
When human pride and human sway
Have run their circle of decay;
And, mocking—the funereal stone,
Alone attests its builder gone.
Oh! vain such temple, o'er the sleep
Which none remain to watch or weep.
I could not choose but think how vain
The struggle fierce for worthless gain.
And calm and bright the moon looked down
O'er the white shrines of that fair town;

While heavily the cocoa-tree
Drooped o'er the walls its panoply,
A warrior proud, whose crested head
Bends mournful o'er the recent dead,
And shadows deep athwart the plain
Usurp the silver moonbeam's reign;
For every ruined building cast
Shadows, like memories of the past.
And not a sound the wind brought nigh,
Save the far jackal's wailing cry,
And that came from the field now red
With the fierce banquet I had spread:
Accursed and unnatural feast,
For worm, and fly, and bird, and beast;
  While round me earth and heaven recorded
The folly of life's desperate game,
  And the cold justice still awarded
By time, which makes all lots the same.

Slayer or slain, it matters not,
We struggle, perish, are forgot!
The earth grows green above the gone,
And the calm heaven looks sternly on.
'Twas folly this—the gloomy night
Fled before morning's orient light;
City and river owned its power,
And I, too, gladdened with the hour;
I saw my own far tents extend
My own proud crescent o'er them bend;
I heard the trumpet's glorious voice
Summon the warriors of my choice.
Again impatient on to lead,
I sprang upon my raven steed,
Again I felt my father's blood
Pour through my veins its burning flood.
My scimetar around I swung,
Forth to the air its lightning sprung,

A beautiful and fiery light,
The meteor of the coming fight.

"I turned from each forgotten grave
To others, which the name they bear
Will long from old oblivion save
The heroes of the race I share.
I thought upon the lonely isle[a]
Where sleeps the lion-king the while,

[a] SHERE SHAH'S TOMB—is situate at Sasseram, in the centre of a tank of water, about a mile in circumference. The name of so renowned a warrior would be likely to occur to a young and enterprising chief, who must, of course, be familiar with his history. His original name was Ferid, changed to Shere Chan, in consequence of having killed a tiger with one blow of his sabre. At the siege of Callinger, he was mortally wounded by the bursting of a shell. "In this dreadful condition, the king began to breathe in great agonies: he, however, encouraged the attack, and gave orders, till, in the evening, news was brought him of the reduction of the place: he then cried out, 'Thanks to Almighty God,' and expired."—*Dow's History of Hindostan.*

Who looked on death, yet paused to die
Till comraded by Victory.
And he, the noblest of my line,
Whose tomb is now the warrior's shrine,
(Where I were well content to be,
So that such fame might live with me.)
The light of peace, the storm of war,
Lord of the earth, our proud Akbar.

"What though our passing day but be
A bubble on eternity;
Small though the circle is, yet still
'Tis ours to colour at our will.
Mine be that consciousness of life
Which has its energies from strife,
Which lives its utmost, knows its power,
Claims from the mind its utmost dower—

With fiery pulse, and ready hand,
That wills, and willing wins command—
That boldly takes from earth its best—
To whom the grave can be but rest.
Mine the fierce free existence spent
Mid meeting ranks and armed tent:—
Save the few moments which I steal
At thy beloved feet to kneel—
And own the warrior's wild career
Has no such joy as waits him here—
When all that hope can dream is hung
Upon the music of thy tongue.
Ah! never is that cherished face
Banished from its accustomed place—
It shines upon my weariest night,
It leads me on in thickest fight:
All that seems most opposed to be
Is yet associate with thee—

Together life and thee depart,
Dream—idol—treasure of my heart.'

Again, again Murad must wield
His scimetar in battle-field:
And must he leave his lonely flower
To pine in solitary bower?
Has power no aid—has wealth no charm,
The weight of absence to disarm?
Alas! she will not touch her lute—
What!—sing?—and not for Murad's ear
The echo of the heart is mute,
And that alone makes music dear.
In vain, in vain that royal hall
Is decked as for a festival.
The sunny birds, whose shining wings
Seem as if bathed in golden springs,

Though worth the gems they cost—and fair
As those which knew her earlier care.
The flowers—though there the rose expand
The sweetest depths wind ever fanned.
Ah! earth and sky have loveliest hues—
  But none to match that dearest red,
Born of the heart, which still renews
  The life that on itself is fed.
The maiden whom we love bestows
Her magic on the haunted rose.
Such was the colour—when her cheek
Spoke what the lip might never speak.
The crimson flush which could confess
All that we hoped—but dared not guess.
That blush which through the world is known
To love, and to the rose alone—
A sweet companionship, which never
The poet's dreaming eye may sever.

And there were tulips, whose rich leaves
The rainbow's dying light receives;
For only summer sun and skies
Could lend to earth such radiant dyes;
But still the earth will have its share,
The stem is green—the foliage fair—
Those coronals of gems but glow
Over the withered heart below—
That one dark spot, like passion's fire,
Consuming with its own desire.
And pale, as one who dares not turn
Upon her inmost thoughts, and learn,
If it be love their depths conceal,
Love she alone is doomed to feel—
The jasmine droopeth mournfully
Over the bright anemone,
The summer's proud and sun-burnt child:
In vain the queen is not beguiled,

They waste their bloom. Nadira's eye
Neglects them—let them pine and die.
Ah! birds and flowers may not suffice
The heart that throbs with stronger ties.
Again, again Murad is gone,
Again his young bride weeps alone:
Seeks her old nurse, to win her ear
With magic stories once so dear,
And calls the Almas to her aid.
With graceful dance, and gentle singing,
And bells like those some desert home
Hears from the camel's neck far ringing.
Alas! she will not raise her brow;
Yet stay—some spell hath caught her now:
That melody has touched her heart.
Oh, triumph of Zilara's art;
She listens to the mournful strain,
And bids her sing that song again.

SONG.

" My lonely lute, how can I ask
For music from thy silent strings?
It is too sorrowful a task,
When only swept by memory's wings:
Yet waken from thy charmed sleep,
Although I wake thee but to weep.

" Yet once I had a thousand songs,
As now I have but only one.
Ah, love, whate'er to thee belongs,
With all life's other links, has done;
And I can breathe no other words
Than thou hast left upon the chords.

" They say Camdeo's[a] place of rest,
When floating down the Ganges' tide,
Is in the languid lotus breast,
Amid whose sweets he loves to hide.
Oh, false and cruel, though divine,
What dost thou in so fair a shrine ?

" And such the hearts that thou dost choose,
As pure, as fair, to shelter thee ;
Alas ! they know not what they lose
Who chance thy dwelling-place to be.
For, never more in happy dream
Will they float down life's sunny stream.

" My gentle lute, repeat one name,
The very soul of love, and thine :
No ; sleep in silence, let me frame
Some other love to image mine ;

[a] The Indian Cupid.

Steal sadness from another's tone,
I dare not trust me with my own.

"Thy chords will win their mournful way,
All treasured thoughts to them belong;
For things it were so hard to say
Are murmured easily in song—
It is for music to impart
The secrets of the burthened heart.

"Go, taught by misery and love,
And thou hast spells for every ear:
But the sweet skill each pulse to move,
Alas! hath bought its knowledge dear—
Bought by the wretchedness of years,
A whole life dedicate to tears."

The voice has ceased, the chords are mute,
The singer droops upon her lute;

But, oh, the fulness of each tone
Straight to Nadira's heart hath gone—
As if that mournful song revealed
Depths in that heart till then concealed,
A world of melancholy thought,
Then only into being brought;
Those tender mysteries of the soul,
Like words on an enchanted scroll,
Whose mystic meaning but appears
When washed and understood by tears.
She gazed upon the singer's face;
Deeply that young brow wore the trace
Of years that leave their stamp behind:
The wearied hope—the fever'd mind—
The heart which on itself hath turned,
Worn out with feelings—slighted—spurned-
Till scarce one throb remained to show
What warm emotions slept below,

Never to be renewed again,
And known but by remembered pain.

Her cheek was pale—impassioned pale—
  Like ashes white with former fire,
Passion which might no more prevail,
  The rose had been its own sweet pyre.
You gazed upon the large black eyes,
  And felt what unshed tears were there;
Deep, gloomy, wild, like midnight skies,
  When storms are heavy on the air—
And on the small red lip sat scorn,
Writhing from what the past had borne.
But far too proud to sigh—the will,
Though crushed, subdued, was haughty still;
Last refuge of the spirit's pain,
Which finds endurance in disdain.

Others wore blossoms in their hair,
And golden bangles round the arm.
She took no pride in being fair,
The gay delight of youth to charm;
The softer wish of love to please,
What had she now to do with these?
She knew herself a bartered slave,
Whose only refuge was the grave.
Unsoftened now by those sweet notes,
Which half subdued the grief they told,
Her long black hair neglected floats
O'er that wan face, like marble cold;
And carelessly her listless hand
Wandered above her lute's command
But silently—or just a tone
Woke into music, and was gone.

"Come hither, maiden, take thy seat,"
Nadira said, "here at my feet."

And, with the sweetness of a child
Who smiles, and deems all else must smile,
She gave the blossoms which she held,
And praised the singer's skill the while;
Then started with a sad surprise,
For tears were in the stranger's eyes.
Ah, only those who rarely know
Kind words, can tell how sweet they seem.
Great God, that there are those below
To whom such words are like a dream.

"Come," said the young Sultana, "come
To our lone garden by the river,
Where summer hath its loveliest home,
And where Camdeo fills his quiver.
If, as thou sayest, 'tis stored with flowers,
Where will he find them fair as ours?
And the sweet songs which thou canst sing
Methinks might charm away his sting."

The evening banquet soon is spread—
There the pomegranate's rougher red
Was cloven, that it might disclose
A colour stolen from the rose—
The brown pistachio's glossy shell,
The citron where faint odours dwell;
And near the watermelon stands,
Fresh from the Jumna's shining sands;
And golden grapes, whose bloom and hue
Wear morning light and morning dew,
Or purple with the deepest dye
That flushes evening's farewell sky.
And in the slender vases glow—
Vases that seem like sculptured snow—
The rich sherbets are sparkling bright
With ruby and with amber light.
A fragrant mat the ground o'erspread,
With an old tamarind overhead,

With drooping bough of darkest green,
Forms for their feast a pleasant screen.

'Tis night, but such delicious time
Would seem like day in northern clime.
A pure and holy element,
Where light and shade, together blent,
Are like the mind's high atmosphere,
When hope is calm, and heaven is near.
The moon is young—her crescent brow
Wears its ethereal beauty now,
  Unconscious of the crime and care,
Which even her brief reign must know,
  Till she will pine to be so fair,
With such a weary world below.
A tremulous and silvery beam
Melts over palace, garden, stream;

Each flower beneath that tranquil ray,
Wears other beauty than by day,
All pale as if with love, and lose
Their rich variety of hues—
  But ah, that languid loveliness
Hath magic, to the noon unknown,
  A deep and pensive tenderness,
The heart at once feels is its own—
How fragrant to these dewy hours,
  The white magnolia lifts its urn
The very Araby of flowers,
  Wherein all precious odours burn.
And when the wind disperses these,
The faint scent of the lemon trees
Mingles with that rich sigh which dwells
Within the baubool's[a] golden bells.

[a] A favourite Indian flower.

The dark green peepul's[a] glossy leaves,
Like mirrors each a ray receives,
While luminous the moonlight falls,
O'er pearl kiosk and marble walls,
Those graceful palaces that stand
Most like the work of peri-land.
And rippling to the lovely shore,
The river tremulous with light,
On its small waves, is covered o'er
With the sweet offerings of the night—
Heaps of that scented grass whose bands
Have all been wove by pious hands,
Or wreaths, where fragrantly combined,
Red and white lotus flowers are twined.
And on the deep blue waters float
Many a cocoa-nut's small boat,

[a] A tree usually planted by graves.

Holding within the lamp which bears
The maiden's dearest hopes and prayers,
Watch'd far as ever eye can see,
A vain but tender augury.
Alas! this world is not his home,
And still love trusts that signs will come
From his own native world of bliss,
To guide him through the shades of this.
Dreams, omens, he delights in these,
For love is linked with fantasies,

But hark! upon the plaining wind
Zilara's music floats again;
That midnight breeze could never find
A meeter echo than that strain,
Sad as the sobbing gale that sweeps
The last sere leaf which autumn keeps,

Yet sweet as when the waters fall
And make some lone glade musical.

SONG.

"Lady, sweet Lady, song of mine
Was never meant for thee,
I sing but from my heart, and thine—
It cannot beat with me.

"You have not knelt in vain despair,
Beneath a love as vain,
That desperate—that devoted love,
Life never knows again.

"What know you of a weary hope,
The fatal and the fond,
That feels it has no home on earth,
Yet dares not look beyond?

" The bitterness of wasted youth,
Impatient of its tears;
The dreary days, the feverish nights,
The long account of years.

" The vain regret, the dream destroy'd,
The vacancy of heart,
When life's illusions, one by one,
First darken—then depart.

" The vacant heart! ah, worse,—a shrine
For one beloved name:
Kept, not a blessing, but a curse,
Amid remorse and shame.

" To know how deep, how pure, how true
Your early feelings were;
But mock'd, betray'd, disdain'd, and chang'd,
They have but left despair.

" And yet the happy and the young
Bear in their hearts a well
Of gentlest, kindliest sympathy,
Where tears unbidden dwell.

" Then, lady, listen to my lute;
As angels look below,
And e'en in heaven pause to weep
O'er grief they cannot know."

The song was o'er, but yet the strings
Made melancholy murmurings;
She wandered on from air to air,
Changeful as fancies when they bear
The impress of the various thought,
From memory's twilight caverns brought.
At length, one wild, peculiar chime
Recalled this tale of ancient time.

THE RAKI.[a]

" There's dust upon the distant wind, and shadow on the skies,
And anxiously the maiden strains her long-expecting eyes
And fancies she can catch the light far flashing from the sword,
And see the silver crescents raised, of him, the Mogul lord.

" She stands upon a lofty tower, and gazes o'er the plain:
Alas! that eyes so beautiful, should turn on heaven in vain.
'Tis but a sudden storm whose weight is darkeniug on the air,
The lightning sweeps the hill, but shows no coming warriors there.

[a] THE RAKI.—The gift of a bracelet, whose acceptance was expressed by the return of a vest. It is a Rajpoot custom. Where there is both valour and beauty, it were hard not to find something of chivalric observance; and the one alluded to excels in devotion any record of the old romances, however their heroes might be *voués aux dames*. The chieftain to whom the Raki (*anglicé*, bracelet) was

" Yet crimson as the morning ray, she wears the robe of pride
That binds the gallant Humaioon, a brother, to her side;
His gift, what time around his arm, the glittering band was
rolled,
With stars of ev'ry precious stone enwrought in shining gold.

" Bound by the Raki's sacred tie, his ready aid to yield,
Though beauty waited in the bower, and glory in the field:
Why comes he not, that chieftain vow'd, to this her hour of
need?
Has honour no devotedness? Has chivalry no speed?

sent, became bound to the service of some unknown dame, whose bright eyes could dispense no reward, inasmuch as he was never to see them, the "bracelet-bound brother," and his adopted sister, never holding any intercourse. Humaioon accepted this gage from Kurnavati, the princess of Cheetore, and at her summons abandoned his nearly completed conquest of Bengal, and flew to succour, or at least

" The Rajpoot's daughter gazes round, she sees the plain afar
Spread shining to the sun, which lights no trace of coming war.
The very storm has past away, as neither earth nor heaven
One token of their sympathy had to her anguish given.

" And still more hopeless than when last she on their camp
looked down,
The foeman's gathered numbers close round the devoted town :
And daily in that fatal trench her chosen soldiers fall,
And spread themselves, a rampart vain, around that ruined wall.

" Her eyes upon her city turn—alas ! what can they meet,
But famine, and despair, and death, in every lonely street ?
Women and children wander pale, or with despairing eye
Look farewell to their native hearths, and lay them down to die.

" She seeks her palace, where her court collects in mournful
bands,
Of maidens who but watch and weep, and wring their weary
hands.

One word there came from her white lips, one word, she spoke
no more;
But that word was for life and death, the young queen named
—the Jojr.
[the last,
" A wild shriek filled those palace halls—one shriek, it was
All womanish complaint and wail have in its utterance past:
They kneel at Kurnavati's feet, they bathe her hands in tears,
Then hurrying to their task of death, each calm and stern
appears.

" There is a mighty cavern close beside the palace gate,
Dark, gloomy temple, meet to make such sacrifice to fate:
There heap they up all precious woods, the sandal and the rose,
While fragrant oils and essences like some sweet river flows.

" And shawls from rich Cashmere, and robes from Dacca's
golden loom,
And caskets filled with Orient pearls, or yet more rare per-
fume:

And lutes and wreaths, all graceful toys, of woman's gentle
care,
Are heaped upon that royal pile, the general doom to share.

" But weep for those the human things, so lovely and so young,
The panting hearts which still to life so passionately clung;
Some bound to this dear earth by hope, and some by love's
strong thrall,
And yet dishonour's high disdain was paramount with all.

" Her silver robe flowed to her feet, with jewels circled round,
And in her long and raven hair the regal gems were bound;
And diamonds blaze, ruby and pearl were glittering in her zone,
And there, with starry emeralds set, the radiant Kandjar[a] shone.

" The youthful Ranee led the way, while in her glorious eyes
Shone spiritual, the clear deep light, that is in moonlit skies:

[a] THE KANDJAR.—The Kandjar is a small poniard, set with gems, worn in the girdle of royal females, as a sign of their rank.

Pale and resolved, her noble brow was worthy of a race
Whose proud blood flowed in those blue veins unconscious of disgrace.

"Solemn and slow with mournful chaunt, come that devoted band,
And Kurnavati follows last—the red torch in her hand:
She fires the pile, a death-black smoke mounts from that dreary cave—
Fling back the city gates—the foe, can now find but a grave.

"Hark the fierce music on the wind, the atabal, the gong,
The stern avenger is behind, he has not tarried long:
They brought his summons, though he stood before his plighted bride;
They brought his summons, though he stood in all but victory's pride.

"Yet down he flung the bridal wreath, he left the field unwon,
All that a warrior might achieve, young Humaioon had done,
Too late—he saw the reddening sky, he saw the smoke arise,
A few faint stragglers lived to tell the Ranee's sacrifice.

"But still the monarch held a sword, and had a debt to pay;
Small cause had Buhadour to boast—the triumph of that day:
Again the lone streets flowed with blood, and though too late to save,
Vengeance was the funereal rite at Kurnavati's grave."

Deep silence chained the listeners round,
When, lo, another plaintive sound,
Came from the river's side, and there
They saw a girl with loosened hair

Seat her beneath a peepul tree,
Where swung her gurrah[a] mournfully,
Filled with the cool and limpid wave,
An offering o'er some dear one's grave.
At once Zilara caught the tone,
And made it, as she sung, her own.

SONG.

"Oh weep not o'er the quiet grave,
Although the spirit lost be near;
Weep not, for well those phantoms know
How vain the grief above their bier.

[a] GURRAH.—The Gurrah is the water-jar which the Hindoo women poise so gracefully on their heads. Heber mentions, that they hang gurrahs on the peepul, a species of sacred tree; and much planted about graves, that the spirits of the deceased may drink the holy waves of the Ganges.

Weep not—ah no, 'tis best to die,
Ere all of bloom from life is fled;
Why live, when feelings, friends, and faith
Have long been numbered with the dead?

"They know no rainbow-hope that weeps
Itself away to deepest shade;
Nor love, whose very happiness
Should make the trusting heart afraid.
Ah, human tears are tears of fire,
That scorch and wither as they flow;
Then let them fall for those who live,
And not for those who sleep below.

"Yes, weep for those, whose silver chain
Has long been loosed, and yet live on;
The doomed to drink from life's dark spring,
Whose golden bowl has long been gone.

Aye, weep for those, the weary, worn,
The bound to earth by some vain tie;
Some lingering love, some fond regret,
Who loathe to live, yet fear to die."

A moment's rest, and then once more
Zilara tried her memory's store,
And woke, while o'er the strings she bowed,
A tale of Rajahstan the proud.

KISHEN KOWER.[a]

"Bold as the falcon that faces the sun,
Wild as the streams when in torrents they run,

[a] KISHEN KOWER.—The history of Kishen Kower is of a later period than, properly speaking, belongs to my story. I trust the anachronism will be its own excuse. Without entering into

Fierce as the flame when the jungle's on fire,
Are the chieftains who call on the day-star as Sire.
Since the Moghuls were driven from stately Mandoo,
And left but their ruins their reign to renew,
Those hills have paid tribute to no foreign lord,
And their children have kept what they won by the sword.
Yet downcast each forehead, a sullen dismay
At Oudeypoor reigns in the Durbar[a] to-day,
For bootless the struggle, and weary the fight,
Which Adjeit Sing pictures with frown black as night:—

the many intrigues to which she was sacrificed, it is only needful to observe, that her hand was claimed by the kings of Jeypour and Joudpour. A destructive war was the consequence, for marriage with the one must incur the enmity of the other. A weak father, and an ambitious minister, led to the immolation of the beautiful victim; an unmarried daughter being held to be the greatest possible disgrace.

[a] The court, or divan, to use a term familiar to most English readers.

"Oh fatal the hour, when Makundra's dark pass
Saw the blood of our bravest sink red in the grass;
And the gifts which were destined to honour the bride,
By the contest of rivals in crimson were dyed.
Where are the warriors who once wont to stand
The glory and rampart of Rajahstan's land?
Ask of the hills for their young and their brave,
They will point to the valleys beneath as their grave.
The mother sits pale by her desolate hearth,
And weeps o'er the infant an orphan from birth;
While the eldest boy watches the dust on the spear,
Which as yet his weak hand is unable to rear.
The fruit is ungathered, the harvest unsown,
And the vulture exults o'er our fields as his own:
There is famine on earth—there is plague in the air,
And all for a woman whose face is too fair."
There was silence like that from the tomb, for no sound
Was heard from the chieftains who darkened around,

When the voice of a woman arose in reply,
'The daughters of Rajahstan know how to die.'

"Day breaks, and the earliest glory of morn
Afar o'er the tops of the mountains is borne;
Then the young Kishen Kower wandered through the
green bowers,
That sheltered the bloom of the island of flowers;
Where a fair summer palace arose mid the shade,
Which a thousand broad trees for the noon-hour had made
Far around spread the hills with their varying hue,
From the deepest of purple to faintest of blue;
On one side the courts of the Rana are spread,
The white marble studded with granite's deep red;
While far sweeps the terrace, and rises the dome,
Till lost in the pure clouds above like a home.
Beside is a lake covered over with isles,
As the face of a beauty is varied with smiles:

Some small, just a nest for the heron that springs
From the long grass, and flashes the light from its wings;
Some bearing one palm-tree, the stately and fair,
Alone like a column aloft in the air;
While others have shrubs and sweet plants that extend
Their boughs to the stream o'er whose mirror they bend.
The lily that queen-like uprears to the sun,
The loveliest face that his light is upon;
While beside stands the cypress, which darkens the wave
With a foliage meant only to shadow the grave.

But the isle in the midst was the fairest of all
Where ran the carved trellis around the light hall;
Where the green creeper's starry wreaths, scented and bright,
Wooed the small purple doves 'mid their shelter to light;
There the proud oleander with white tufts was hung,
And the fragile clematis its silver showers flung,

And the nutmeg's soft pink was near lost in the pride
Of the pomegranate blossom that blushed at its side.
There the butterflies flitted around on the leaves,
From which every wing its own colour receives;
There the scarlet finch past like a light on the wind,
And the hues of the bayas like sunbeams combined;
Till the dazzled eye sought from such splendours to rove
And rested at last on the soft lilac dove;
Whose song seemed a dirge that at evening should be
Pour'd forth from the height of the sad cypress tree.

Her long dark hair plaited with gold on each braid;
Her feet bound with jewels which flash'd through the shade;
One hand filled with blossoms, pure hyacinth bells
Which treasure the summer's first breath in their cells;
The other caressing her white antelope,
In all the young beauty of life and of hope.
The princess roved onwards, her heart in her eyes,
That sought their delight in the fair earth and skies.

Oh, loveliest time! oh, happiest day!
When the heart is unconscious, and knows not its sway,
When the favourite bird, or the earliest flower,
Or the crouching fawn's eyes, make the joy of the hour,
And the spirits and steps are as light as the sleep
Which never has waken'd to watch or to weep.
She bounds o'er the soft grass, half woman half child,
As gay as her antelope, almost as wild.
The bloom of her cheek is like that on her years;
She has never known pain, she has never known tears,
And thought has no grief, and no fear to impart;
The shadow of Eden is yet on her heart.

"The midnight has fallen, the quiet, the deep,
Yet in yon Zenana none lie down for sleep.
Like frighted birds gathered in timorous bands,
The young slaves within it are wringing their hands.

The mother hath covered her head with her veil,
She weepeth no tears, and she maketh no wail;
But all that lone chamber pass silently by;
She has flung her on earth, to despair and to die.
But a lamp is yet burning in one dismal room,
Young princess; where now is thy morning of bloom?
Ah, ages, long ages, have passed in a breath,
And life's bitter knowledge has heralded death.
At the edge of the musnud[a] she bends on her knee,
While her eyes watch the face of the stern Chaud Baee.[b]
Proud, beautiful, fierce; while she gazes, the tone
Of those high murky features grows almost her own;
And the blood of her race rushes dark to her brow,
The spirit of heroes has entered her now.

[a] The MUSNUD.—A sort of matrass assigned as the place of honour, usually covered with gold cloth, velvet, or embroidery, and placed on the floor.

[b] Chand Baee was the aunt of Kishen Kower, and on her devolved the task of preparing the unfortunate Princess.

" ' Bring the death-cup, and never for my sake shall shame
Quell the pride of my house, or dishonour its name.'
She drained the sherbet, while Chand Baee looked on,
Like a warrior that marks the career of his son.
But life is so strong in each pure azure vein,
That they take not the venom—she drains it again.
The haughty eye closes, the white teeth are set,
And the dew-damps of pain on the wrung brow are wet:
The slight frame is writhing—she sinks to the ground;
She yields to no struggle, she utters no sound—
The small hands are clenched—they relax—it is past,
And her aunt kneels beside her—kneels weeping at last.
Again morning breaks over palace and lake,
But where are the glad eyes it wont to awake.
Weep, weep, 'mid a bright world of beauty and bloom,
For the sweet human flower that lies low in the tomb.
And wild through the palace the death-song is breathing,
And white are the blossoms, the slaves weep while wreathing,

To strew at the feet and to bind round the head,
Of her who was numbered last night with the dead:
They braid her long tresses, they drop the shroud o'er,
And gaze on her cold and pale beauty no more:
But the heart has her image, and long after-years
Will keep her sad memory with music and tears."

Days pass, yet still Zilara's song
Beguiled the regal beauty's hours
As the wind bears some bird along
Over the haunted orange bowers.
'Twas as till then she had not known
How much her heart had for its own;
And Murad's image seemed more dear,
These higher chords of feeling strung;
" And love shone brighter for the shade
" That others' sorrows round it flung.

It was one sultry noon, yet sweet
The air which through the matted grass
Came cool—its breezes had to meet
A hundred plumes, ere it could pass;
The peacock's shining feathers wave
From many a young and graceful slave;
Who silent kneel amid the gloom
Of that dim and perfumed room.

Beyond, the radiant sunbeams rest
On many a minaret's glittering crest,
And white the dazzling tombs below,
Like masses sculptured of pure snow;
While round stands many a giant tree,
Like pillars of a sanctuary,
Whose glossy foliage, dark and bright,
Reflects, and yet excludes the light.
Oh sun, how glad thy rays are shed;
How canst thou glory o'er the dead?

Ah, folly this of human pride,
What are the dead to one like thee,
Whose mirror is the mighty tide,
Where time flows to eternity ?
A single race, a single age,
What are they in thy pilgrimage ?
The tent, the palace, and the tomb
Repeat the universal doom.
Man passes, but upon the plain
Still the sweet seasons hold their reign,
As if earth were their sole domain,
And man a toy and mockery thrown
Upon the world he deems his own.

All is so calm—the sunny air
Has not a current nor a shade ;
The vivid green the rice-fields wear
Seems of one moveless emerald made ;

The Ganges' quiet waves are rolled
In one broad sheet of molten gold;
And in the tufted brakes beside,
The water-fowls and herons hide.
And the still earth might also seem
The strange creation of a dream.
Actual, breathless—dead, yet bright—
Unblest with life—yet mocked with light,
It mocks our nature's fate and power,
When we look forth in such an hour,
And that repose in nature see,
The fond desire of every heart;
But, oh! thou inner world, to thee,
What outward world can e'er impart?

But turn we to that darkened hall,
Where the cool fountain's pleasant fall

Wakens the odours yet unshed
From the blue hyacinth's drooping head;
And on the crimson couch beside
Reclines the young and royal bride;
Not sleeping, though the water's chime,
The lulling flowers, the languid time,
Might soothe her to the gentlest sleep,
O'er which the genii watchings keep,
And shed from their enchanted wings,
All loveliest imaginings:
No, there is murmuring in her ear,
A voice than sleep's more soft and dear;
While that pale slave with drooping eye
Speaks mournfully of days gone by;
And every plaintive word is fraught
With music which the heart has taught,
A pleading and confiding tone,
To those mute lips so long unknown.

Ah! all in vain that she had said
To feeling, "slumber like the dead;"
Had bade each pang that might convulse
With fiery throb the beating pulse,
Each faded hope, each early dream,
Sleep as beneath a frozen stream;
Such as her native mountains bear,
The cold white hills around Jerdair;
Heights clad with that eternal snow,
Which happier valleys never know.
Some star in that ungenial sky,
Might well shape such a destiny;
But till within the dark calm grave,
There yet will run an under-wave,
Which human sympathy can still
Excite and melt to tears at will;
No magic any spell affords,
Whose power is like a few kind words.

'Twas strange the contrast in the pair,
That leant by that cool fountain's side;
Both very young, both very fair,
By nature, not by fate allied:
The one a darling and delight,
A creature like the morning bright:
Whose weeping is the sunny shower
Half light upon an April hour;
One who a long glad childhood past,
But left that happy home to 'bide
Where love a deeper shadow cast,
A hero's proud and treasured bride:
Who her light footstep more adored,
Than all the triumphs of his sword;
Whose kingdom at her feet the while,
Had seemed too little for a smile.
But that pale slave was as the tomb
Of her own youth, of her own bloom;

Enough remained to show how fair,
In other days those features were,
Still lingered delicate and fine,
The shadow of their pure outline;
The small curved lip, the glossy brow,
That melancholy beauty wore,
Whose spell is in the silent past,
Which saith to love and hope, "No more:
No more, for hope hath long forsaken
Love, though at first its gentle guide
First lulled to sleep, then left to 'waken,
'Mid tears and scorn, despair and pride,
And only those who know can tell,
What love is after hope's farewell.
And first she spoke of childhood's time,
Little, what childhood ought to be,
When tenderly the gentle child
Is cherished at its mother's knee,

Who deems that ne'er before, from heaven
So sweet a thing to earth was given.
But she an orphan had no share
In fond affection's early care;
She knew not love until it came
Far other, though it bore that name.

"I felt," she said, "all things grow bright!
Before the spirit's inward light.
Earth was more lovely, night and day,
Conscious of some enchanted sway,
That flung around an atmosphere
I had not deemed could brighten here.
And I have gazed on Moohreeb's face,
As exiles watch their native place;
I knew his step before it stirred
From its green nest the cautious bird.

I woke, till eye and cheek grew dim,
Then slept—it was to dream of him;
I lived for days upon a word
Less watchful ear had never heard:
And won from careless look or sign
A happiness too dearly mine.
He was my world—I wished to make
My heart a temple for his sake.
It matters not—such passionate love
Has only life and hope above;
A wanderer from its home on high,
Here it is sent to droop and die.
He loved me not—or but a day,
I was a flower upon his way:
A moment near his heart enshrined,
Then flung to perish on the wind."

She hid her face within her hands—
Methinks the maiden well might weep;
The heart it has a weary task
Which unrequited love must keep;
At once a treasure and a curse,
The shadow on its universe.
Alas, for young and wasted years,
For long nights only spent in tears;
For hopes, like lamps in some dim urn,
That but for the departed burn.
Alas for her whose drooping brow
Scarce struggles with its sorrow now.
At first Nadira wept to see
That hopelessness of misery.
But, oh, she was too glad, too young,
To dream of an eternal grief;
A thousand thoughts within her sprung,
Of solace, promise, and relief.

Slowly Zilara raised her head,
Then, moved by some strong feeling, said,
" A boon, kind Princess, there is one
Which won by me, were heaven won;
Not wealth, not freedom—wealth to me
Is worthless, as all wealth must be;
When there are none its gifts to share:
For whom have I on earth to care?
None from whose head its golden shrine
May ward the ills that fell on mine.
And freedom—'tis a worthless boon
To one who will be free so soon;
And yet I have one prayer, so dear,
I dare not hope—I only fear."
" Speak, trembler, be your wish confest,
And trust Nadira with the rest."
" Lady, look forth on yonder tower,
There spend I morn and midnight's hour,

Beneath that lonely peepul tree—[a]
Well may its branches wave o'er me,
For their dark wreaths are ever shed,
The mournful tribute to the dead—
There sit I, in fond wish to cheer
A captive's sad and lonely ear,
And strive his drooping hopes to raise,
With songs that breathe of happier days.
Lady, methinks I scarce need tell
The name that I have loved so well;
'Tis Moohreeb, captured by the sword
Of him, thy own unconquered lord.
Lady, one word—one look from thee,
And Murad sets that captive free."

[a] Bishop Heber mentions a picturesque custom prevalent in one of the Rajpoot tribes. The death of a warrior is only announced to his family by branches of the peepul-tree strewed before his door.

"And your will follow at his side?"
"Ah, no, he hath another bride;
And if I pity, can'st thou bear
To think upon her lone despair?
No, break the mountain-chieftain's chain,
Give him to hope, home, love again."
Her cheek with former beauty blushed,
The crimson to her forehead rushed,
Her eyes rekindled, till their light
Flashed from the lash's summer night.
So eager was her prayer, so strong
The love that bore her soul along.
Ah! many loves for many hearts;
But if mortality has known
One which its native heaven imparts
To that fine soil where it has grown;
'Tis in that first and early feeling,
Passion's most spiritual revealing;

Half dream, all poetry—whose hope
Colours life's charmed horoscope
With hues so beautiful, so pure—
Whose nature is not to endure.
As well expect the tints to last,
The rainbow on the storm hath cast.
Of all young feelings, love first dies,
Soon the world piles its obsequies;
Yet there have been who still would keep
That early vision dear and deep,
The wretched they, but love requires
Tears, tears to keep alive his fires:
The happy will forget, but those
To whom despair denies repose,
From whom all future light is gone,
The sad, the slighted, still love on.

The ghurrees[a] are chiming the morning hour,
The voice of the priest is heard from the tower,
The turrets of Delhi are white in the sun,
Alas! that another bright day has begun.
Children of earth, ah! how can ye bear
This constant awakening to toil and to care?
Out upon morning, its hours recall,
Earth to its trouble, man to his thrall;
Out upon morning, it chases the night,
With all the sweet dreams that on slumber alight;
Out upon morning, which wakes us to life,
With its toil, its repining, its sorrow and strife.
And yet there were many in Delhi that day,
Who watched the first light, and rejoiced in the ray;

[a] The Ghurree is a sort of gong, on which the hour is struck when the brazen cup fills, and sinks down in the water of the vessel on which it floats. This primitive method of reckoning time is still retained in India.

They wait their young monarch, who comes from the field
With a wreath on his spear, and a dent on his shield.
There's a throng in the east, 'tis the king and his train:
And first prance the horsemen, who scarce can restrain
Their steeds[a] that are wild as the wind, and as bold
As the riders who curb them with bridles of gold:
The elephants follow, and o'er each proud head
The chattah that glitters with gems is outspread,
Whence the silver bells fall with their musical sound,
While the howdah's[b] red trappings float bright on the ground:
Behind stalk the camels, which, weary and worn,
Seem to stretch their long necks, and repine at the morn:
And wild on the air the fierce war-echoes come,
The voice of the atabal, trumpet, and drum:

[a] One fashion I confess to having omitted: however, here it is in plain prose. The tails of the chargers are often dyed a bright scarlet, which, when at full gallop, has much the appearance of leaving a track of fire after them.

[b] THE HOWDAH is the seat on the elephant's back; often formed of pure silver.

Half lost in the shout that ascends from the crowd,
Who delight in the young, and the brave, and the proud.
'Tis folly to talk of the right and the wrong,
The triumph will carry the many along.

A dearer welcome far remains,
Than that of Delhi's crowded plains?
Soon Murad seeks the shadowy hall,
Cool with the fountain's languid fall;
His own, his best beloved to meet.
Why kneels Nadira at his feet?
With flushing cheek, and eager air,
One word hath won her easy prayer;
It is such happiness to grant,
The slightest fancy that can haunt
The loved one's wish, earth hath no gem,
And heaven no hope, too dear for them.

That night beheld a vessel glide,
Over the Jumna's onward tide;

One watched that vessel from the shore,
Too conscious of the freight it bore,
And wretched in her granted vow,
Sees Moohreeb leaning by the prow,
And knows that soon the winding river
Will hide him from her view for ever.

Next morn they found that youthful slave
Still kneeling by the sacred wave;
Her head was leaning on the stone
  Of an old ruined tomb beside,
A fitting pillow cold and lone,
  The dead had to the dead supplied:
The heart's last string hath snapt in twain,
Oh, earth, receive thine own again:
The weary one at length has rest
Within thy chill but quiet breast.

Long did the young Nadira keep
The memory of that maiden's lute;
And call to mind her songs, and weep,
Long after those charmed chords were mute.
A small white tomb was raised, to show
That human sorrow slept below;
And solemn verse and sacred line
Were graved on that funerêal shrine.
And by its side the cypress tree
Stood, like unchanging memory.
And even to this hour are thrown
Green wreaths on that remembered stone;
And songs remain, whose tunes are fraught
With music which herself first taught.
And, it is said, one lonely star
Still brings a murmur sweet and far
Upon the silent midnight air,
As if Zilara wandered there.

Oh! if her poet soul be blent
With its aerial element,
May its lone course be where the rill
Goes singing at its own glad will;
Where early flowers unclose and die;
Where shells beside the ocean lie,
Fill'd with strange tones: or where the breeze
Sheds odours o'er the moonlit seas:
There let her gentle spirit rove,
Embalmed by poetry and love.

KATE KEARNEY.

Why doth the maiden turn away
From voice so sweet, and words so dear?
Why doth the maiden turn away
When love and flattery woo her ear?
And rarely that enchanted twain
Whisper in woman's ear in vain.
Why doth the maiden leave the hall?
No face is fair as hers is fair,
No step has such a fairy fall,
No azure eyes like hers are there.

The maiden seeks her lonely bower,
Although her father's guests are met;
She knows it is the midnight hour,
She knows the first pale star is set,
And now the silver moon-beams wake
The spirits of the haunted Lake.
The waves take rainbow hues, and now
The shining train are gliding by,
Their chieftain lifts his glorious brow,
The maiden meets his lingering eye.

The glittering shapes melt into night;
Another look, their chief is gone,
And chill and gray comes morning's light,
And clear and cold the Lake flows on;
Close, close the casement, not for sleep,
Over such visions eyes but weep.

How many share such destiny,
How many, lured by fancy's beam,
Ask the impossible to be,
And pine, the victims of a dream.

The romantic story of Kate Kearney, "who dwelt by the shore of Killarney," is too well known to need repetition. She is said to have cherished a visionary passion for O'Donoghue, an enchanted chieftain who haunts those beautiful Lakes, and to have died the victim "of folly, of love, and of madness."

FURNESS ABBEY.

IN THE VALE OF NIGHTSHADE, LANCASHIRE.

I WISH for the days of the olden time,
When the hours were told by the abbey chime,
When the glorious stars looked down through the midnight dim,
Like approving saints on the choir's sweet hymn:
I think of the days we are living now,
And I sigh for those of the veil and the vow.

I would be content alone to dwell
Where the ivy shut out the sun from my cell,
With the death's-head at my side, and the missal on my knee,
Praying to that heaven which was opening to me:
Fevered and vain are the days I lead now,
And I sigh for those of the veil and the vow.

Silken broidery no more would I wear,
Nor golden combs in my golden hair;
I wore them but for one, and in vain they were worn;
My robe should be of serge, my crown of the thorn:
'Tis a cold false world we dwell in now,
And I sigh for the days of the veil and the vow.

I would that the cloister's quiet were mine;
In the silent depths of some holy shrine.

I would tell my blessed beads, and would weep away
From my inmost soul every stain of clay:
My heart's young hopes they have left me now,
And I sigh for the days of the veil and the vow.

"Through four centuries this religious house flourished, extending continually its revenues and its hospitality; and how much longer the monks might have kept their station, had not our eighth Henry and the Pope quarrelled about the divorce of Catherine of Arragon, it is impossible to say,"—*Baines' History of Lancashire.*

THE AFRICAN PRINCE.

It was a king in Africa,
He had an only son;
And none of Europe's crowned kings
Could have a dearer one.

With good cane arrows five feet long,
And with a shining bow,
When but a boy, to the palm woods
Would that young hunter go.

And home he brought white ivory,
And many a spotted hide:
When leopards fierce and beautiful
Beneath his arrows died.

Around his arms, around his brow,
A shining bar was rolled;
It was to mark his royal blood,
He wore that bar of gold.

And often at his father's feet,
The evening he would pass;
When, weary of the hunt, he lay
Upon the scented grass.

Alas! it was an evil day,
When such a thing could be:
When strangers, pale and terrible,
Came o'er the distant sea.

They found the young prince mid the woods,
The palm woods deep and dark:
That day his lion-hunt was done,
They bore him to their bark.

They bound him in a narrow hold,
With others of his kind;
For weeks did that accursed ship
Sail on before the wind.

Now shame upon the cruel wind,
And on the cruel sea,
That did not with some mighty storm,
Set those poor captives free:

Or, shame to those weak thoughts, so fain
To have their wilful way:
God knoweth what is best for all—
The winds and seas obey.

At length a lovely island rose
From out the ocean wave;
They took him to the market-place,
And sold him for a slave.

Some built them homes, and in the shade
Of flowered and fragrant trees,
They half forgot the palm-hid huts
They left far o'er the seas.

But he was born of nobler blood,
And was of nobler kind;
And even unto death, his heart
For its own kindred pined.

There came to him a seraph child
With eyes of gentlest blue:
If there are angels in high heaven,
Earth has its angels too.

She cheered him with her holy words,
She soothed him with her tears;
And pityingly she spoke with him
Of home and early years.

And when his heart was all subdued
By kindness into love,
She taught him from this weary earth
To look in faith above.

She told him how the Saviour died
For man upon the tree;
"'He suffered," said the holy child,
"For you as well as me."

Sorrow and death have need of faith—
The African believed;
As rain falls fertile on the earth
Those words his soul received.

He died in hope as only those
Who die in Christ depart—
One blessed name within his lips,
One hope within his heart.

THE MINSTER.

Dim thro' the sculptured aisles the sunbeam falls
More like a dream
Of some imagined beam,
Than actual daylight over mortal walls.

A strain of music like the rushing wind,
But deep and sweet
As when the waters meet
In one mysterious harmony combined.

So swells the mighty organ, rich and full,
As if it were the soul
Which raised the glorious whole
Of that fair building, vast and wonderful.

Doth not the spirit feel its influence,
All vain and feverish care,'
All thoughts that worldly are,
Strife, tumult, mirth, and fear are vanished hence.

The world is put aside, within the heart
Those hopes arise
Thrice sacred mysteries,
In which our earthly nature has no part.

Oh, Christian Fane, the soul expands in thee,
Thine altar and thy tomb
Speak of the hope and doom
Which leads and cheers man to eternity.

A LEGEND OF TINTAGEL CASTLE.

ALONE in the forest, Sir Lancelot rode
O'er the neck of his courser the reins lightly flowed
And beside hung his helmet, for bare was his brow
To meet the soft breeze that was fanning him now.

And " the flowers of the forest" were many and sweet,
Which, crushed at each step by his proud courser's feet,
Gave forth all their fragrance, while thick over-head
The boughs of the oak and the elm-tree were spread.

The wind stirred its branches, as if its low suit
Were urged, like a lover who wakens the lute,

And through the dark foliage came sparkling and bright
Like rain from the green leaves, in small gems of light.

There was stillness, not silence, for dancing along,
A brook went its way like a child with a song;
Now hidden, where rushes and water-flags grow;
Now clear, while white pebbles were glistening below.

Lo, bright as a vision, and fair as a dream,
The face of a maiden is seen in the stream;
With her hair like a mantle of gold to her knee,
Stands a lady as lovely as lady can be.

Short speech tells a love-tale;—the bard's sweetest words
Are poor, beside those which each memory hoards;
Sound of some gentle whisper, the haunting and low,
Such as love may have murmured—ah, long, long ago.

She led him away to an odorous cave,
Where the emerald spars shone like stars in the wave,
And the green moss and violets crowded beneath,
And the ash at the entrance hung down like a wreath.

They might have been happy, if love could but learn
A lesson from some flowers, and like their leaves turn
Round their own inward world, their own lone fragrant nest,
Content with its sweetness, content with its rest.

But the sound of the trumpet was heard from afar,
And Sir Lancelot rode forth again to the war;
And the wood-nymph was left as aye woman will be,
Who trusts her whole being, oh, false love, to thee.

For months, every sunbeam that brightened the gloom,
She deemed was the waving of Lancelot's plume;

She knew not of the proud and the beautiful queen,
Whose image was treasured as hers once had been.

There was many a fair dame, and many a knight,
Made the banks of the river like fairy-land bright;
And among those whose shadow was cast on the tide,
Was Lancelot kneeling at Genevra's side.

With purple sails heavily drooping around
The mast, and the prow, with the vale lily bound;
And towed by two swans, a small vessel drew near
But high on the deck was a pall-covered bier.

They oared with their white wings, the bark thro' the flood,
Till arrived at the bank where Sir Lancelot stood:
A wind swept the river, and flung back the pall,
And there lay a lady, the fairest of all.

But pale as a statue, like sunshine on snow,
The bright hair seemed mocking the cold face below:
Sweet truants, the blush and the smile both are fled—
Sir Lancelot weeps as he kneels by the dead.

And these are love's records; a vow and a dream,
And the sweet shadow passes away from life's stream:
Too late we awake to regret—but what tears
Can bring back the waste to our hearts and our years?

SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE.

DIVINEST art, the stars above
  Were fated on thy birth to shine;
Oh, born of beauty and of love,
  What early poetry was thine!

The softness of Ionian night
  Upon Ionian summer lay,
One planet gave its vesper light,
  Enough to guide a lover's way;
And gave the fountain as it played
  The semblance of a silvery shower,
And as its waters fell, they made
  A music meet for such an hour;

That, and the tones the gentle wind
Won from the leaf, as from a lute,
In natural melody combined,
Now that all ruder sound was mute;
And odours floated on the air,
As many a nymph had just unbound
The wreath that bound their raven hair,
And flung the fragrant tresses round.

Pillowed on violet leaves, which prest
Filled the sweet chamber with their sighs,
Lulled by the lyre's low notes to rest,
A Grecian youth in slumber lies;
And at his side a maiden stands,
The dark hair braided on her brow,
The lute within her slender hands,
But hushed is all its music now.

She would not wake him from his dreams,
Although she has so much to say,
Although the morning's earliest beams
Will see her warrior torn away.
How fond and earnest is the gaze
Upon these sleeping features thrown,
She who yet never dared to raise
Her timid eyes to meet his own.

She bends her lover's rest above,
Thoughtful with gentle hopes and fears,
And that unutterable love
Which never yet spoke but in tears;
She would not that those tears should fall
Upon the cherished sleeper's face,
She turns, and sees upon the wall
Its imaged shade, its perfect grace;
With eager hand she marked each line,
The shadowy brow, the arching head,

Till some creative power divine,
  Love's likeness o'er love's shadow spread:
Since then, what passion and what power
  Has dwelt upon the painter's art;
How has it soothed the absent hour,
  With looks that wear life's loveliest part.

Oh, painter of our English isle,
  Whose name is now upon my line,
Who gave to beauty's blush and smile
  All that could make them most divine;
The fair Ionian's ancient claim
  Was never paid, till paid by thee,
And thou didst honour to her name,
  By showing what her sex can be.

THE COUNTRY RETREAT.

Oh lone and lovely solitude,
Washed by the sounding sea;
Nature was in a poet's mood,
When she created thee.

How pleasant in the hour of noon
To wander through the shade;
The soft and golden shade which June
Flings o'er thy inland glade:

The wild rose like a wreath above,
The ash-tree's fairy keys,

The aspen trembling, as if love
Were whispered by the breeze;

These, or the beech's darker bough,
For canopy o'er head,
While moss and fragile flowers below
An elfin pillow spread.

Here one might dream the hours away,
As if the world had not
Or grief, or care, or disarray,
To darken human lot.

Yet 'tis not here that I would dwell,
Though fair the place may be,
The summer's favourite citadel:—
A busier scene for me!

I love to see the human face
Reflect the human mind,
To watch in every crowded place
Their opposites combined.

There's more for thought in one brief hour
In yonder busy street,
Than all that ever leaf or flower
Taught in their green retreat.

Pope's hackneyed line of "An honest man's the noblest work of God," has a companion in Cowper's "God made the country, but man made the town;" both are the perfection of copy-book cant. I am far from intending to deprecate that respectable individual, "an honest man," but surely genius, intellectual goodness and greatness, are far nobler emanations of the Divine Spirit than mere honesty. This is just another branch of that melodramatic morality which talks of rural felicity, and unsophisticated pleasures. Has a wife been too extravagant, or a husband too gay, all is settled by their agreeing to reform, and live in the country.

Industry, intellect, and skill
Appear in all their pride,
The glorious force of human will
Triumphs on every side.

Is a young lady to be a pattern person; forsooth, she must have been brought up in the country. Your philosophers inculcate it, your poets rave about it, your every-day people look upon it as something between a pleasure and a duty—till poor London has its merits as little understood as any popular question which every body discusses. I do own I have a most affectionate attachment for London—the deep voice of her multitudes "haunts me like a passion." I delight in observing the infinite variety of her crowded streets, the rich merchandise of the shops, the vast buildings, whether raised for pomp, commerce, or charity, down to the barrel-organ, whose music is only common because it is beautiful. The country is no more left as it was originally created, than Belgrave Square remains its pristine swamp. The forest has been felled, the marsh drained, the enclosures planted, and the field ploughed. All these, begging Mr. Cowper's pardon, are the works of man's hands; and so is the town—the one is not more artificial than the other.

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Yet touched with meekness, for on all
Is set the sign and seal
Of sorrow, suffering, and thrall,
Which none but own and feel;

The hearse that passes with its dead,
The homeless beggar's prayer,
Speak words of warning, and of dread,
To every passer there.

Both are the result of God's good gifts—industry and intelligence exerted to the utmost. Let any one ride down Highgate Hill on a summer's day, see the immense mass of buildings spread like a dark panorama, hear the ceaseless and peculiar sound, which has been likened to the hollow roar of the ocean, but has an utterly differing tone; watch the dense cloud that hangs over all—one perpetual storm, which yet bursts not—and then say, if ever was witnessed hill or valley that so powerfully impressed the imagination with that sublime and awful feeling which is the epic of poetry.

Aye beautiful the dreaming brought
By valleys and green fields;
But deeper feeling, higher thought,
Is what the city yields.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

DEAD !—it was like a thunderbolt
To hear that he was dead ;
Though for long weeks the words of fear
Came from his dying bed ;
Yet hope denied, and would deny—
We did not think that he could die.

The poet has a glorious hold
Upon the human heart,
Yet glory is from sympathy
A light alone—apart ;
But there was something in thy name,
Which touched us with a dearer claim

The earnest feeling borne to thee
Was like a household tie,
A sunshine on our common life,
And from our daily sky.
Thy works are those familiar things
From which so much of memory springs.

We talked of them beside the hearth,
Till every story blends
With some remembered intercourse
Of near and dearest friends,
Friends that in early youth were ours.
Connected with life's happiest hours.

How well I can recall the time
When first I turned thy page,
The green boughs closed above my head
A natural hermitage;

And sang a little brook along,
As if it heard and caught thy song.

I peopled all the walks and shades
With images of thine;
The lime-tree was a lady's bower,
The yew-tree was a shrine:
Almost I deemed each sunbeam shone
O'er banner, spear, and morion.

Now, not one single trace is left
Of that sequestered nook;
The very course is turned aside
Of that melodious brook:
Not so the memories can depart,
Then garner'd in my inmost heart.

The past was his—his generous song
Went back to other days,

With filial feeling, which still sees
Something to love and praise,
And closer drew the ties which bind
Man with his country and his kind.

It rang throughout his native land,
A bold and stirring song,
As the merle's hymn at matin sweet,
And as the trumpet strong:
A touch there was of each degree,
Half minstrel and half knight was he.

How many a lonely mountain glade
Lives in his verse anew,
Linked with associate sympathy,
The tender and the true;
For nature has fresh beauty brought,
When animate with life from thought.

'Tis not the valley nor the hill,
Tho' beautiful they be,
That can suffice the heart, till touched
As they were touched by thee;
Thou who didst glorify the whole,
By pouring forth the poet's soul.

Who now could stand upon the banks
Of thine own "silver Tweed?"
Nor deem they heard thy "warrior's horn,"
Or heard thy "shepherd's reed?"
Immutable as Nature's claim,
The ground is hallowed by thy name.

I cannot bear to see the shelf
Where ranged thy volumes stand,
And think that mute is now thy lip,
And cold is now thy hand;

That, hadst thou been more common clay,
So soon thou hadst not passed sway,

For thou didst die before thy time,
The tenement o'erwrought,
The heart consumed by its desire,
The body worn by thought;
Thyself the victim of thy shrine,
A glorious sacrifice was thine.

Alas, it is too soon for this—
The future for thy fame;
But now we mourn, as if we mourned
A father's cherished claim.
Ah! time may bid the laurel wave—
We can but weep above thy grave.

FOUNTAIN'S ABBEY.

NEVER more, when the day is o'er,
Will the lonely vespers sound;
No bells are ringing—no monks are singing,
When the moonlight falls around.

A few pale flowers, which in other hours
May have cheered the dreary mood;
When the votary turned to the world he had spurned,
And repined at the solitude.

Still do they blow 'mid the ruins below,
For fallen are fane and shrine,
And the moss has grown o'er the sculptured stone
Of an altar no more divine.

Still on the walls where the sunshine falls,
The ancient fruit-tree grows;
And o'er tablet and tomb, extends the bloom
Of many a wilding rose.

Fair though they be, yet they seemed to me
To mock the wreck below;
For mighty the tower, where the fragile flower
May now as in triumph blow.

Oh, foolish the thought, that my fancy brought;
More true and more wise to say,
That still thus doth spring, some gentle thing,
With its beauty to cheer decay.

THE SEA-SHORE.

I SHOULD like to dwell where the deep blue sea
Rock'd to and fro as tranquilly,
As if it were willing the halcyon's nest
Should shelter through summer its beautiful guest.
When a plaining murmur like that of a song,
And a silvery line come the waves along:
Now bathing—now leaving the gentle shore,
Where shining sea-shells lay scattered o'er.

And children wandering along the strand,
With the eager eye and the busy hand,

Heaping the pebbles and green sea-weed,
Like treasures laid up for a time of need.
Or tempting the waves with their daring feet,
To launch, perhaps, some tiny fleet:
Mimicking those which bear afar
The wealth of trade—and the strength of war.

I should love, when the sun-set reddened the foam,
To watch the fisherman's boat come home,
With his well-filled net and glittering spoil:
Well has the noon-tide repaid its toil.
While the ships that lie in the distance away
Catch on their canvass the crimsoning ray;
Like fairy ships in the tales of old,
When the sails they spread were purple and gold.

Then the deep delight of the starry night,
With its shadowy depths and dreamy light:

When far away spreads the boundless sea,
As if it imaged infinity.
Let me hear the winds go singing by,
Lulling the waves with their melody:
While the moon like a mother watches their sleep,
And I ask no home but beside the deep.

THE REPLY OF THE FOUNTAIN.

How deep within each human heart,
A thousand treasured feelings lie;
Things precious, delicate, apart,
Too sensitive for human eye.

Our purest feelings, and our best,
Yet shrinking from the common view;
Rarely except in song exprest,
And yet how tender, and how true!

They wake, and know their power, when eve
Flings on the west its transient glow;
Yet long dark shadows dimly weave
A gloom round some green path below.

Who dreams not then—the young dream on—
Life traced at hope's delicious will;
And those whose youth of heart is gone,
Perhaps have visions dearer still.

They rise, too, when expected least,
When gay yourself, amid the gay,
The heart from revelry hath ceased
To muse o'er hours long past away.

And who can think upon the past
And not weep o'er it as a grave?
How many leaves life's wreath has cast!
What lights have sunk beneath the wave!

But most these deep emotions rise
When, drooping o'er our thoughts alone,
Our former dearest sympathies
Come back, and claim us for their own.

Such mood is on the maiden's mind
Who bends o'er yon clear fount her brow;
Long years, that leave their trace behind,
Long years, are present with her now.

Yet, once before she asked a sign
From that wild fountain's plaintive song;
And silvery, with the soft moonshine,
Those singing waters past along.

It was an hour of beauty, made
For the young heart's impassioned mood,
For love of its sweet self afraid,
For hope that colours solitude.

'Alas," the maiden sighed, "since first
I said, Oh fountain, read my doom;
What vainest fancies have I nurst,
Of which I am myself the tomb!

" The love was checked—the hope was vain,
I deemed that I could feel no more;
Why, false one, did we meet again,
To show thine influence was not o'er?

" I thought that I could never weep
Again, as I had wept for thee,
That love was buried cold and deep,
That pride and scorn kept watch by me.

" My early hopes, my early tears
Were now almost forgotten things,
And other cares, and other years
Had brought what all experience brings—

" Indifference, weariness, disdain,
That taught and ready smile which grows
A habit soon—as streams retain
The shape and light in which they froze.

" Again I met that faithless eye,
Again I heard that charmed tongue;
I felt they were my destiny,
I knew again the spell they flung.

" Ah! years have fled, since last his name
Was breathed amid the twilight dim;
It was to dream of him I came,
And now again I dream of him.

" But changed and cold, my soul has been
Too deeply wrung, too long unmoved,
Too hardened in life's troubled scene
To love as I could once have loved.

" Sweet fountain, once I asked thy waves
To whisper hope's enchanted spell;
Now I but ask thy haunted caves
To teach me how to say farewell."

She leaned her head upon her hand,
  She gazed upon that fountain lone
Which wandered by its wild-flower strand
  With a low, mournful, ceaseless moan.

It soothed her with a sweet deceit
  Of pity, murmured on the breeze;
Ah deep the grief, which seeks to cheat
  Itself with fantasies like these.

HEBE.

YOUTH! thou art a lovely time,
With thy wild and dreaming eyes;
Looking onwards to their prime,
Coloured by their April skies,
Yet I do not wish for thee,
Pass, oh! quickly pass from me.

Thou hast all too much unrest,
Haunted by vain hopes and fears;
Though thy cheeks with smiles be drest,
Yet that cheek is wet with tears.
Bitter are the frequent showers,
Falling in thy sunny hours.

Let my heart grow calm and cold,
Calm to sorrow, cold to love;
Let affections loose their hold,
Let my spirit look above.
I am weary—youth pass on,
All thy dearest gifts are gone.

She in whose sweet form the Greek
Bade his loveliest vision dwell;
She of yon bright cup and cheek,
From her native heaven fell:
Type of what may never last,
Soon the heaven of youth is past.

Oh! farewell—for never more
Can thy dreams again be mine;
Hope and truth and faith are o'er,
And the heart which was their shrine
Has no boon of thee to seek,
Asking but to rest or break.

THOUGHTS ON CHRISTMAS-DAY IN INDIA.

It is Christmas, and the sunshine
Lies golden on the fields,
And flowers of white and purple
Yonder fragrant creeper yields.

Like the plumes of some bold warrior,
The cocoa-tree on high,
Lifts aloft its feathery branches,
Amid the deep blue sky.

From yonder shadowy peepul,
The pale fair lilac dove,
Like music from a temple,
Sings a song of grief and love.

The earth is bright with blossoms,
And a thousand jewelled wings,
Mid the green boughs of the tamarind
A sudden sunshine flings.

For the East, is earth's first-born,
And hath a glorious dower,
As Nature there had lavished
Her beauty and her power.

And yet I pine for England,
For my own—my distant home;
My heart is in that island,
Where'er my steps may roam.

It is merry there at Christmas—
We have no Christmas here;
'Tis a weary thing, a summer
That lasts throughout the year

I remember how the banners
Hung round our ancient hall,
Bound with wreaths of shining holly,
Brave winter's coronal.

And above each rusty helmet
Waved a new and cheering plume,
A branch of crimson berries,
And the latest rose in bloom.

And the white and pearly misletoe
Hung half concealed o'er head,
I remember one sweet maiden,
Whose cheek it dyed with red.

The morning waked with carols,
A young and joyous band
Of small and rosy songsters,
Came tripping hand in hand.

And sang beneath our windows
Just as the round red sun
Began to melt the hoar-frost,
And the clear cold day begun.

And at night the aged harper
Played his old tunes o'er and o'er;
From sixteen up to sixty,
All were dancing on that floor.

Those were the days of childhood,
The buoyant and the bright;
When hope was life's sweet sovereign,
And the heart and step were light.

I shall come again—a stranger
To all that once I knew,
For the hurried steps of manhood
From life's flowers have dash'd the dew.

I yet may ask their welcome,
And return from whence I came;
But a change is wrought within me,
They will not seem the same.

For my spirits are grown weary,
And my days of youth are o'er,
And the mirth of that glad season
Is what I can feel no more.

TO OLINTHUS GREGORY,

ON HEARING OF THE DEATH OF HIS ELDEST SON, WHO WAS DROWNED AS HE WAS RETURNING BY WATER TO HIS FATHER'S HOUSE AT WOOLWICH.

Is there a spot where Pity's foot,
  Although unsandalled, fears to tread,
A silence where her voice is mute,
  Where tears, and only tears, are shed ?
It is the desolated home
  Where Hope was yet a recent guest,
Where Hope again may never come,
  Or come, and only speak of rest.

They gave my hand the pictured scroll,
And bade me only fancy there
A parent's agony of soul,
A parent's long and last despair;
The sunshine on the sudden wave,
Which closed above the youthful head,
Mocking the green and quiet grave,
Which waits the time-appointed dead.

I thought upon the lone fire-side,
Begirt with all familiar thought,
The future, where a father's pride
So much from present promise wrought:
The sweet anxiety of fears,
Anxious from love's excess alone,
The fond reliance upon years
More precious to us than our own:

All past—then weeping words there came
From out a still and darkened room,
They could not bear to name a name
Written so newly on the tomb.
They said he was so good and kind,
The voices sank, the eyes grew dim;
So much of love he left behind,
So much of life had died with him.

Ah, pity for the long beloved,
Ah, pity for the early dead;
The young, the promising, removed
Ere life a light or leaf had shed.
Nay, rather pity those whose doom
It is to wait and weep behind,
The father, who within the tomb
Sees all life held most dear enshrined.

THE NIZAM'S DAUGHTER.

She is yet a child in years,
  Twelve springs are on her face,
Yet in her slender form appears
  The woman's perfect grace.
Her silken hair, that glossy black,
  But only to be found
There, or upon the raven's back,
  Falls sweeping to the ground.

'Tis parted in two shining braids
With silver and with gold,
And one large pearl by contrast aids
The darkness of each fold.
And for she is so young, that flowers
Seem natural to her now,
There wreaths the champac's snowy showers
Around her sculptured brow.

Close to her throat the silvery vest
By shining clasps is bound,
Scarce may her graceful shape be guest,
Mid drapery floating round.
But the small curve of that veined throat,
Like marble, but more warm,
The fairy foot and hand denote
How perfect is the form.

Upon the ankle and the wrist
There is a band of gold,
No step by Grecian fountain kiss'd,
Was of diviner mould.
In the bright girdle round her waist,
Where the red rubies shine,
The kandjar's[a] glittering hilt is placed,
To mark her royal line.

Her face is like the moonlight pale,
Strangely and purely fair,
For never summer sun nor gale
Has touched the softness there.
There are no colours of the rose,
Alone the lip is red;
No blush disturbs the sweet repose
Which o'er that cheek is shed.

[a] The small poniard worn by Hindoo princesses.

And yet the large black eyes, like night,
Have passion and have power;
Within their sleepy depths is light
For some wild wakening hour.
A world of sad and tender dreams
'Neath those long lashes sleep,
A native pensiveness that seems
Too still and sweet to weep.

Of such seclusion know we nought:
Yet surely woman here
Grows shrouded from all common thought,
More delicate and dear.
And love, thus made a thing apart,
Must seem the more divine,
When the sweet temple of the heart
Is a thrice-veiled shrine.

LONG YEARS HAVE PAST SINCE LAST I STOOD.

A place of rugged rocks, adown whose sides
The mountain torrent rushes; on whose crags
The raven builds her nest, and tells her young
Of former funeral feasts.

Long years have past since last I stood
Alone amid this mountain scene,
Unlike the future which I dreamed,
How like my future it has been!
A cold grey sky o'erhung with clouds,
With showers in every passing shade,
How like the moral atmosphere
Whose gloom my horoscope has made!

I thought if yet my weary feet
Could rove my native hills again,
A world of feeling would revive,
Sweet feelings wasted, worn in vain.
My early hopes, my early joys,
I dreamed those valleys would restore;
I asked for childhood to return,
For childhood, which returns no more.

Surely the scene itself is changed!
There did not always rest as now
That shadow in the valley's depth,
That gloom upon the mountain-brow.
Wild flowers within the chasms dwelt
Like treasures in some fairy hold,
And morning o'er the mountains shed
Her kindling world of vapoury gold.

Another season of the year
Is now upon the earth and me;
Another spring will light these hills—
No other spring mine own may be:
I must retune my unstrung harp,
I must awake the sleeping tomb,
I must recall the loved and lost,
Ere spring again for me could bloom.

I've wandered, but it was in vain,
In many a far and foreign clime,
Absence is not forgetfulness,
And distance cannot vanquish time.
One face was ever in my sight,
One voice was ever on my ear,
From all earth's loveliness I turned
To wish, Ah that the dead were here!

Oh! weary wandering to no home,
Oh! weary wandering alone,
I turned to childhood's once glad scenes
And found life's last illusion flown.
Ah! those who left their childhood's scenes
For after-years of toil and pain,
Who but bring back the breaking heart
Should never seek those scenes again.

THE FUNERAL.

MARK you not yon sad procession;
'Mid the ruin'd abbey's gloom,
Hastening to the worm's possession,
To the dark and silent tomb!

See the velvet pall hangs over
Poor mortality's remains;
We should shudder to discover
What that coffin's space contains.

Death itself is lovely—wearing
But the colder shape of sleep;
Or the solemn statue bearing
Beauty that forbids to weep.

But decay—the pulses tremble
When its livid signs appear;
When the once-loved lips resemble
All we loathe, and all we fear.

Is it not a ghastly ending
For the body's godlike form,
Thus to the damp earth descending,
Food and triumph to the worm?

Better far the red pile blazing
With the spicy Indian wood,
Incense unto heaven raising
From the sandal oil's sweet flood.

In the bright pyre's kindling flashes,
Let my yielded soul ascend;
Fling to the wild winds my ashes
'Till with mother-earth they blend.

Not so,—let the pale urn keep them;
Touch'd with spices, oil, and wine;
Let there be some one to weep them;
Wilt thou keep that urn? Love mine!

THE SHEPHERD BOY.

LIKE some vision olden
Of far other time,
When the age was golden,
In the young world's prime
Is thy soft pipe ringing,
O lonely shepherd boy,
What song art thou singing,
In thy youth and joy ?

Or art thou complaining
Of thy lowly lot,
And thine own disdaining
Dost ask what thou hast not?
Of the future dreaming,
Weary of the past,
For the present scheming,
All but what thou hast.

No, thou art delighting
In thy summer home;
Where the flowers inviting
Tempt the bee to roam;
Where the cowslip bending,
With its golden bells,
Of each glad hour's ending
With a sweet chime tells.

All wild creatures love him
When he is alone,
Every bird above him
Sings its softest tone.
Thankful to high Heaven,
Humble in thy joy,
Much to thee is given,
Lowly shepherd boy.

THE FAIRY OF THE FOUNTAINS.

Why did she love her mother's so?
It hath wrought her wondrous wo.

Once she saw an armed knight
In the pale sepulchral light;
When the sullen starbeams throw
Evil spells on earth below:
And the moon is cold and pale,
And a voice is on the gale,
Like a lost soul's heavenward cry,
Hopeless in its agony.

He stood beside the castle-gate,
The hour was dark, the hour was late;

With the bearing of a king
Did he at the portal ring,
And the loud and hollow bell
Sounded like a Christian's knell.
That pale child stood on the wall,
Watching there, and saw it all.
Then she was a child as fair
As the opening blossoms are:
But with large black eyes, whose light
Spoke of mystery and might.
The stately stranger's head was bound
With a bright and golden round;
Curiously inlaid, each scale
Shone upon his glittering mail;
His high brow was cold and dim,
And she felt she hated him.
Then she heard her mother's voice,
Saying, "'Tis not at my choice!

"Wo for ever, wo the hour,
"When you sought my secret bower,
"Listening to the word of fear,
"Never meant for human ear.
"Thy suspicion's vain endeavour,
"Wo! wo! parted us for ever."

Still the porter of the hall
Heeded not that crown'd knight's call.
When a glittering shape there came,
With a brow of starry flame;
And he led that knight again
O'er the bleak and barren plain.
He flung, with an appealing cry,
His dark and desperate arms on high;
And from Melusina's sight
Fled away through thickest night.

Who has not, when but a child,
Treasured up some vision wild:
Haunting them with nameless fear,
Filling all they see or hear,
In the midnight's lonely hour,
With a strange mysterious power?
So a terror undefined
Entered in that infant mind;—
A fear that haunted her alone,
For she told her thought to none.

Years passed on, and each one threw,
O'er those walls a deeper hue;
Large and old the ivy leaves
Heavy hung around the eaves,
Till the darksome rooms within
Daylight never entered in.

And the spider's silvery line
Was the only thing to shine.
Years past on,—the fair child now
Wore maiden beauty on her brow—
Beauty such as rarely flowers
In a fallen world like ours.
She was tall;—a queen might wear
Such a proud imperial air;
She was tall, yet when unbound,
Swept her bright hair to the ground,
Glittering like the gold you see
On a young laburnum tree.
Yet her eyes were dark as night,
Melancholy as moonlight,
With the fierce and wilder ray
Of a meteor on its ray.
Lonely was her childhood's time,
Lonelier was her maiden prime;

And she wearied of the hours
Wasted in those gloomy towers;
Sometimes through the sunny sky
She would watch the swallows fly;
Making of the air a bath,
In a thousand joyous rings:
She would ask of them their path,
She would ask of them their wings.
Once her stately mother came,
With her dark eye's funeral flame,
And her cheek as pale as death,
And her cold and whispering breath;
With her sable garments bound
By a mystic girdle round,
Which, when to the east she turned,
With a sudden lustre burned.
Once that ladye, dark and tall,
Stood upon the castle wall;

And she marked her daughter's eyes
Fix'd upon the glad sunrise,
With a sad yet eager look,
Such as fixes on a book
Which describes some happy lot,
Lit with joys that we have not.
And the thought of what has been,
  And the thought of what might be,
Makes us crave the fancied scene,
  And despise reality.
'Twas a drear and desert plain
Lay around their own domain;
But, far off, a world more fair
Outlined on the sunny air;
Hung amid the purple clouds,
With which early morning shrouds
All her blushes, brief and bright,
Waking up from sleep and night.

In a voice so low and dread,
As a voice that wakes the dead;
Then that stately lady said:
" Daughter of a kingly line,—
" Daughter, too, of race like mine,—
" Such a kingdom had been thine;
" For thy father was a king,
" Whom I wed with word and ring
" But in an unhappy hour,
" Did he pass my secret bower,—
" Did he listen to the word,
" Mortal ear hath never heard;
" From that hour of grief and pain
" Might we never meet again.
" Maiden, listen to my rede,
" Punished for thy father's deed:
" Here, an exile I must stay,
" While he sees the light of day.

" Child, his race is mixed in thee,
" With mine own more high degree.
" Hadst thou at Christ's altar stood,
" Bathed in His redeeming flood;
" Thou of my wild race had known
" But its loveliness alone.
" Now thou hast a mingled dower,
" Human passion—fairy power.
" But forefend thee from the last:
" Be its gifts behind thee cast.
" Many tears will wash away
" Mortal sin from mortal clay.
" Keep thou then a timid eye
" On the hopes that fill yon sky;
" Bend thou with a suppliant knee,
" And thy soul yet saved may be;—
" Saved by Him who died to save
" Man from death beyond the grave."

Easy 'tis advice to give,
  Hard it is advice to take
Years that lived—and years to live,
  Wide and weary difference make.
To that elder ladye's mood,
Suited silent solitude:
For her lorn heart's wasted soil
Now repaid not hope's sweet toil.
Never more could spring-flowers grow,
On the worn-out soil below;
But to the young Melusine,
Earth and heaven were yet divine.
Still illusion's purple light
  Was upon the morning tide,
And there rose before her sight
  The loveliness of life untried.
Three sweet genii,—Youth, Love, Hope,
Drew her future horoscope.

Must such lights themselves consume?
Must she be her own dark tomb?
But far other thoughts than these—
Life's enchanted phantasies,
Were with Melusina now,
Stern and dark contracts her brow;
And her bitten lip is white,
As with passionate resolve,
Muttered she,—"It is my right;
"On me let the task devolve:
"Since such blood to me belongs;
"It shall seek its own bright sphere;
"I will well avenge the wrongs
"Of my mother exiled here."

Two long years are come and past,
And the maiden's lot is cast;—

Cast in mystery and power,
Worked out by the watching hour,
By the word that spirits tell,
By the sign and by the spell.
Two long years have come and gone,
And the maiden dwells alone.
For the deed which she hath done,
Is she now a banished one;—
Banished from her mother's arms,
Banished by her mother's charms,
With a curse of grief and pain,
Never more to meet again.
Great was the revenge she wrought,
Dearly that revenge was bought.

When the maiden felt her powers,
Straight she sought her father's towers.
With a sign, and with a word,
Passed she on unseen, unheard,

One, a pallid minstrel born
On Good Friday's mystic morn,
Said he saw a lady there,
Tall and stately, strange and fair,
With a stern and glittering eye,
Like a shadow gliding by.
All was fear and awe next day,
For the king had passed away.
He had pledged his court at night,
In the red grape's flowing light.
All his pages saw him sleeping;
Next day there was wail and weeping.
Halls and lands were wandered o'er,
But they saw their king no more.
  Strange it is, and sad to tell,
What the royal knight befell.
Far upon a desert land,
Does a mighty mountain stand;

On its summit there is snow,
While the bleak pines moan below ;
And within there is a cave
Opened for a monarch's grave
Bound in an enchanted sleep
She hath laid him still and deep.
She, his only child, has made
That strange tomb where he is laid :
Nothing more of earth to know,
Till the final trumpet blow.
Mortal lip nor mortal ear,
Were not made to speak nor hear
That accursed word which sealed,—
All those gloomy depths concealed.
With a look of joy and pride,
Then she sought her mother's side.
Whispering, on her bended knee,
" Oh ! my mother, joyous be ;

"For the mountain torrents spring
"O'er that faithless knight and king."
Not another word she spoke,
For her speech a wild shriek broke;
For the widowed queen upsprung,
Wild her pale thin hands she wrung.
With her black hair falling round,
Flung her desperate on the ground;
While young Melusine stood by,
With a fixed and fearful eye.

When her agony was past,
Slowly rose the queen at last;
With her black hair, like a shroud,
And her bearing high and proud;
With the marble of her brow,
Colder than its custom now;
And her eye with a strange light
Seem'd to blast her daughter's sight.

And she felt her whole frame shrink,
And her young heart's pulses sink;
And the colour left her mouth,
As she saw her mother signing,
One stern hand towards the south,
Where a strange red star was shining.
With a muttered word and gaze,
Fixed upon its vivid rays;
Then she spoke but in a tone,
Her's, yet all unlike her own.—
"Spirit of our spirit-line,
"Curse for me this child of mine.
"Six days yield not to our powers,
"But the seventh day is ours.
"By yon star, and by our line,
"Be thou cursed, maiden mine."
Then the maiden felt hot pain
Run through every burning vein.

Sudden with a fearful cry
Writhes she in her agony;
Burns her cheek as with a flame,
For the maiden knows her shame.

PART II.

By a lovely river's side,
Where the water-lilies glide,
Pale, as if with constant care
Of the treasures which they bear;
For those ivory vases hold
Each a sunny gift of gold.
And blue flowers on the banks,
Grow in wild and drooping ranks,
Bending mournfully above,
O'er the waters which they love;
But which bear off, day by day,
Their shadow and themselves away.

Willows by that river grow
With their leaves half green, half snow,
Summer never seems to be
Present all with that sad tree.
With its bending boughs are wrought
Tender and associate thought,
Of the wreaths that maidens wear
In their long neglected hair.
Of the branches that are thrown
On the last, the funeral stone.
And of those torn wreaths that suit
Youthful minstrel's wasted lute.

But the stream is gay to-night
With the full-moon's golden light,
And the air is sweet with singing,
And the joyous horn is ringing,
While fair groups of dancers round
Circle the enchanted ground.

And a youthful warrior stands
Gazing not upon those bands,
Not upon the lovely scene,
But upon its lovelier queen,
Who with gentle word and smile
Courteous prays his stay awhile.

The fairy of the fountains, she
A strange and lovely mystery,
She of whom wild tales have birth,
When beside a winter hearth,
By some aged crone is told,
Marvel new or legend old.
But the lady fronts him there,
He but sees she is so fair,
He but hears that in her tone
Dwells a music yet unknown;

He but feels that he could die
For the sweetness of her sigh.
But how many dreams take flight
With the dim enamoured night;
Cold the morning light has shone,
And the fairy train are gone,
Melted in the dewy air,
Lonely stands young Raymond there.
Yet not all alone, his heart
Hath a dream that will not part
From that beating heart's recess;
What that dream may lovers guess.

Yet another year hath flown
In a stately hall alone,
Like an idol in a shrine
Sits the radiant Melusine.

It is night, yet o'er the walls,
Light, but light unearthly, falls.
Not from lamp nor taper thrown,
But from many a precious stone,
With whose variegated shade
Is the azure roof inlaid,
And whose coloured radiance throws
Hues of violet and rose.
Sixty pillars, each one shining
With a wreath of rubies twining,
Bear the roof—the snow-white floor
Is with small stars studded o'er.
Sixty vases stand between,
Filled with prefumes for a queen ;
And a silvery cloud exhales
Odours like those fragrant gales,
Which at eve float o'er the sea
From the purple Araby.

Nothing stirs the golden gloom
Of that dim enchanted room.
Not a step is flitting round,
Not a noise, except the sound
Of the distant fountains falling,
With a soft perpetual calling,
To the echoes which reply
Musical and mournfully.

Sits the fairy ladye there,
Like a statue, pale and fair;
From her cheek the rose has fled,
Leaving deeper charms instead.
On that marble brow are wrought
Traces of impassioned thought;
Such as without shade or line
Leave their own mysterious sign.

While her eyes, they are so bright,
Dazzle with imperious light.
Wherefore doth the maiden bend?
Wherefore doth the blush ascend,
Crimson even to her brow,
Sight nor step are near her now?
Hidden by her sweeping robe,
Near her stands a crystal globe,
Gifted with strange power to show
All that she desires to know.

First she sees her palace gate,
With its steps of marble state;
Where two kneeling forms seem weeping
O'er the watch which they are keeping,
While around the dusky boughs
Of a gloomy forest close,
Not for those that blush arose.

But she sees beside the gate,
A young and anxious palmer wait;
Well she knows it is for her,
He has come a worshipper.
For a year and and for a day.
Hath he worn his weary way;
Now a sign from that white hand,
And the portals open stand.
But a moment, and they meet,
Raymond kneels him at her feet;
Reading in her downcast eye,
All that woman can reply.

Weary, weary had the hours
Passed within her fairy bowers;
She was haunted with a dream
Of the knight beside the stream.
Who hath never felt the sense
Of such charmed influence.

When the shapes of midnight sleep
One beloved object keep,
Which amid the cares of day
Never passes quite away?
Guarded for the sweetest mood
Of our happy solitude,
Linked with every thing we love,
Flower below, or star above:
Sweet spell after sweet spell thrown
Till the wide world is its own.

Turned the ladye deadly pale,
As she heard her lover's tale,
"Yes," she said, oh! low sweet word,
Only in a whisper heard.
"Yes, if my true heart may be
Worthy, Christian knight, of thee,
By the love that makes thee mine
I am deeply, dearly thine.

But a spell is on me thrown,
Six days may each deed be shown.
But the seventh day must be
Mine, and only known to me.
Never must thy step intrude
On its silent solitude.
Hidden from each mortal eye
Until seven years pass by.
When these seven years are flown,
All my secret may be known.
But if, with suspicious eye,
Thou on those dark hours wilt pry,
Then farewell, beloved in vain,
Never might we meet again."
Gazing on one worshipped brow,
When hath lover spared a vow ?
With an oath and with a prayer
Did he win the prize he sought.

Never was a bride so fair
As the bride that Raymond brought
From the wood's enchanted bowers
To his old ancestral towers.
—— Oh, sweet love, could thy first prime
Linger on the steps of time,
Man would dream the unkind skies
Sheltered still a Paradise.
But, alas, the serpent's skill
Is amid our garden still.
Soon a dark inquiring thought
On the baron's spirit wrought:
She, who seemed to love him so,
Had she aught he might not know?
Was it wo, how could she bear
Grief he did not soothe nor share?
Was it guilt? no—heaven's own grace
Lightened in that loveliest face.

Then his jealous fancies rose,
(Our Lady keep the mind from those!)
Like a fire within the brain,
Maddens that consuming pain.
Henceforth is no rest by night,
Henceforth day has no delight.
Life hath agonies that tell
Of their late left native hell.
But mid their despair is none
Like that of the jealous one.
'Tis again the fatal day,
When the ladye must away,
To her lonely palace made
Far within the forest shade,
Where the mournful fountains sweep
With a voice that seems to weep.
On that morn Lord Raymond's bride
Ere the daybreak leaves his side.

Never does the ladye speak
But her tears are on his cheek,
And he hears a stifled moan
As she leaves him thus alone.
Hath she then complaint to make,
Is there yet some spell to break ?
Come what will, of weal or wo,
'Tis the best the worst to know.

He hath followed—wo, for both,
That the knight forgot his oath.
Where the silvery fountains fall,
Stands no more the charmed hall;
But the dismal yew-trees droop,
And the pines above them stoop,
While the gloomy branches spread,
As they would above the dead,

In some churchyard large and drear
Haunted with perpetual fear.
Dark and still like some vast grave,
Near there yawns a night-black cave.
O'er its mouth wild ivy twines
There the daylight never shines.
Beast of prey or dragon's lair,
Yet the knight hath entered there.
Dimly doth the distant day
Scatter an uncertain ray,
While strange shapes and ghastly eyes
Mid the spectral darkness rise.
But he hurries on, and near
He sees a sudden light appear,
Wan and cold like that strange lamp
Which amid the charnel's damp
Shows but brightens not the gloom
Of the corpse and of the tomb.

With a cautious step he steals
To the cave that light reveals.
'Tis such grotto as might be,
Nereïd's home beneath the sea.
Crested with the small bright stars
Of a thousand rainbow spars.
And a fountain from the side
Pours beneath its crystal tide,
In a white and marble bath
Singing on its silvery path;
While a meteor's emerald rays
O'er the lucid water plays.—
Close beside, with wild flowers laid,
Is a couch of green moss made.
There he sees his lady lie;
Pain is in her languid eye,
And amid her hair the dew
Half obscures its golden hue;

Damp and heavy, and unbound,
Its wan clusters sweep around.
On her small hand leans her head,—
See the fevered cheek is red,
And the fiery colour rushes
To her brow in hectic blushes.—
What strange vigil is she keeping!
He can hear that she is weeping.—
He will fling him at her feet,
He will kiss away her tears.
Ah, what doth his wild eyes meet,
What below that form appears?
Downwards from that slender waist,
By a golden zone embraced,
Do the many folds escape,
Of the subtle serpent's shape.—
Bright with many-coloured dyes
All the glittering scales arise,

With a red and purple glow
Colouring the waves below!
At the strange and fearful sight,
Stands in mute despair the knight,—
Soon to feel a worse despair,
Melusina sees him there!
And to see him is to part
With the idol of her heart,
Part as just the setting sun
Tells the fatal day is done.
Vanish all those serpent rings,
To her feet the lady springs,
And the shriek rings through the cell,
Of despairing love's farewell,—
Hope and happiness are o'er,
They can meet on earth no more.

— — — — —

Years have past since this wild tale—
Still is heard that lady's wail,

Ever round that ancient tower,
Ere its lord's appointed hour.
With a low and moaning breath
She must mark approaching death,
While remains Lord Raymond's line
Doomed to wander and to pine.
Yet, before the stars are bright,
On the evening's purple light,
She beside the fountain stands
Wringing sad her shadowy hands.
May our Lady, as long years
Pass with their atoning tears,
Pardon with her love divine
The fountain fairy—Melusine![a]

[a] Raymond, first Lord of Lusignan, died as a hermit, at Monserrat. Melusina's was a yet harsher doom: fated to flit over the earth, in pain and sorrow, as a spectre. Only when one of the race of Lusignan was about to die, does she become visible,—and wanders wailing around the Castle. Tradition also represents her shadow as hovering over the Fountain of Thirst.—*Thoms's Lays and Legends.*

A SUTTEE.

GATHER her raven hair in one rich cluster,
Let the white champac light it, as a star
Gives to the dusky night a sudden lustre,
Shining afar.

Shed fragrant oils upon her fragrant bosom,
Until the breathing air around grows sweet;
Scatter the languid jasmine's yellow blossom
Beneath her feet.

Those small white feet are bare—too soft are they
To tread on aught but flowers; and there is roll'd
Round the slight ankle, meet for such display,
The band of gold.

Chains and bright stones are on her arms and neck;
What pleasant vanities are linked with them,
Of happy hours, which youth delights to deck
With gold and gem.

She comes! So comes the Moon, when she has found
A silvery path wherein thro' heaven to glide.
Fling the white veil—a summer cloud—around;
She is a bride!

And yet the crowd that gather at her side
Are pale, and every gazer holds his breath.
Eyes fill with tears unbidden, for the bride—
The bride of Death!

She gives away the garland from her hair,
She gives the gems that she will wear no more;
All the affections, whose love-signs they were,
Are gone before.

The red pile blazes—let the bride ascend,
And lay her head upon her husband's heart,
Now in a perfect unison to blend—
No more to part.

SCENES IN LONDON.

I.

PICCADILLY.

THE sun is on the crowded street,
It kindles those old towers;
Where England's noblest memories meet,
Of old historic hours.

Vast, shadowy, dark, and indistinct,
Tradition's giant fane,
Whereto a thousand years are linked,
In one electric chain.

So stands it when the morning light
First steals upon the skies;
And shadow'd by the fallen night,
The sleeping city lies.

It stands with darkness round it cast,
Touched by the first cold shine;
Vast, vague, and mighty as the past,
Of which it is the shrine.

'Tis lovely when the moonlight falls
Around the sculptured stone
Giving a softness to the walls,
Like love that mourns the gone.

Then comes the gentlest influence
The human heart can know,
The mourning over those gone hence
To the still dust below.

The smoke, the noise, the dust of day,
Have vanished from the scene;
The pale lamps gleam with spirit ray
O'er the park's sweeping green.

Sad shining on her lonely path,
The moon's calm smile above,
Seems as it lulled life's toil and wrath
With universal love.

Past that still hour, and its pale moon,
The city is alive;
It is the busy hour of noon,
When man must seek and strive.

The pressure of our actual life
Is on the waking brow;
Labour and care, endurance, strife,
These are around him now.

How wonderful the common street,
Its tumult and its throng,
The hurrying of the thousand feet
That bear life's cares along.

How strongly is the present felt,
With such a scene beside;
All sounds in one vast murmur melt
The thunder of the tide.

All hurry on—none pause to look
Upon another's face:
The present is an open book
None read, yet all must trace.

The poor man hurries on his race,
His daily bread to find;
The rich man has yet wearier chase,
For pleasure's hard to bind.

All hurry, though it is to pass
For which they live so fast—
What doth the present but amass,
The wealth that makes the past.

The past is round us—those old spires
That glimmer o'er our head;
Not from the present is their fires,
Their light is from the dead.

But for the past, the present's powers
Were waste of toil and mind;
But for those long and glorious hours
Which leave themselves behind.

II.

OXFORD STREET.

Life in its many shapes was there,
The busy and the gay;
Faces that seemed too young and fair
To ever know decay.

Wealth, with its waste, its pomp, and pride,
Led forth its glittering train;
And poverty's pale face beside
Asked aid, and asked in vain.

The shops were filled from many lands,
Toys, silks, and gems, and flowers;
The patient work of many hands,
The hope of many hours.

Yet, mid life's myriad shapes around
There was a sigh of death;
There rose a melancholy sound,
The bugle's wailing breath.

They played a mournful Scottish air,
That on its native hill
Had caught the notes the night-winds bear
From weeping leaf and rill.

'Twas strange to hear that sad wild strain
Its warning music shed,
Rising above life's busy train,
In memory of the dead.

There came a slow and silent band
In sad procession by:
Reversed the musket in each hand,
And downcast every eye.

They bore the soldier to his grave;
The sympathyzing crowd
Divided like a parted wave
By some dark vessel ploughed.

A moment, and all sounds were mute,
For awe was over all;
You heard the soldier's measured foot,
The bugle's wailing call.

The gloves were laid upon the bier,
The helmet and the sword,
The drooping war-horse followed near,
As he, too, mourned his lord.

Slowly—I followed too—they led
To where a church arose,
And flung a shadow o'er the dead,
Deep as their own repose.

Green trees were there—beneath the shade
Of one, was made a grave;
And there to his last rest was laid
The weary and the brave.

They fired a volley o'er the bed
Of an unconscious ear;
The birds sprang fluttering overhead,
Struck with a sudden fear.

All left the ground, the bugles died
Away upon the wind;
Only the tree's green branches sighed
O'er him they left behind.

Again, all filled with light and breath,
I passed the crowded street—
Oh, great extremes of life and death,
How strangely do ye meet!

III.

THE SAVOYARD IN GROSVENOR SQUARE.

He stands within the silent square,
That square of state, of gloom;
A heavy weight is on the air,
Which hangs as o'er a tomb.

It is a tomb which wealth and rank
Have built themselves around—
The general sympathies have shrank
Like flowers on high dry ground.

None heed the wandering boy who sings,
An orphan though so young;
None think how far the singer brings
The songs which he has sung.

None cheer him with a kindly look,
None with a kindly word;
The singer's little pride must brook
To be unpraised, unheard.

At home their sweet bird he was styled,
And oft, when days were long,
His mother called her favourite child
To sing her favourite song.

He wanders now through weary streets,
Till cheek and eye are dim;
How little sympathy he meets,
For music or for him.

Sudden his dark brown cheek grows bright
His dark eyes fill with glee,
Covered with blossoms snowy-white,
He sees an orange tree.

No more the toil-worn face is pale,
Nor faltering step is sad;
He sees his distant native vale,
He sees it, and is glad.

He sees the squirrel climb the pine,
The doves fly through the dell,
The purple clusters of the vine;
He hears the vesper-bell.

His heart is full of hope and home,
Toil, travel, are no more;
And he has happy hours to come
Beside his father's door.

Oh, charm of natural influence!
But for thy lovely ties,
Never might the world-wearied sense
Above the present rise.

Blessed be thy magic every where,
Oh Nature, gentle mother;
How kindlier is for us thy care,
Than ours is for each other.

IV.

THE CITY CHURCHYARD.

I PRAY thee lay me not to rest
  Among these mouldering bones;
Too heavily the earth is prest
  By all these crowded stones.

Life is too gay—life is too near—
  With all its pomp and toil;
I pray thee do not lay me here,
  In such a world-struck soil.

The ceaseless roll of wheels would wake
The slumbers of the dead;
I cannot bear for life to make
Its pathway o'er my head.

The flags around are cold and drear,
They stand apart, alone;
And no one ever pauses here,
To sorrow for the gone.

No: lay me in the far green fields
The summer sunshine cheers;
And where the early wild flower yields
The tribute of its tears.

Where shadows the sepulchral yew,
Where droops the willow tree,
Where the long grass is filled with dew—
Oh! make such grave for me!

And passers-by, at evening's close,
Will pause beside the grave,
And moralize o'er the repose
They fear, and yet they crave.

Perhaps some kindly hand may bring
Its offering to the tomb;
And say, As fades the rose in spring,
So fadeth human bloom.

But here there is no kindly thought
To soothe, and to relieve;
No fancies and no flowers are brought,
That soften while they grieve.

Here Poesy and Love come not—
It is a world of stone;
The grave is bought—is closed—forgot!
And then life hurries on.

Sorrow and beauty—nature—love—
Redeem man's common breath;
Ah! let them shed the grave above—
Give loveliness to death.

If there be one object more material, more revolting, more gloomy than another, it is a crowded churchyard in a city. It has neither sympathy nor memory. The pressed-down stones lie heavy upon the very heart. The sunshine cannot get at them for smoke. There is a crowd; and, like most crowds, there is no companionship. Sympathy is the softener of death, and memory of the loved and the lost is the earthly shadow of their immortality. But who turns aside amid those crowds that hurry through the thronged and noisy streets?—No one can love London better than I do; but never do I wish to be buried there. It is the best place in the world for a house, and the worst for a grave. An Irish patriot once candidly observed to me, "Give me London to live in; but let me die in green Ireland:"—now, this is precisely my opinion.

THE HINDOO GIRL'S SONG.

FLOAT on—float on—my haunted bark,
Above the midnight tide;
Bear softly o'er the waters dark
The hopes that with thee glide.

Float on—float on—thy freight is flowers,
And every flower reveals
The dreaming of my lonely hours,
The hope my spirit feels.

This song alludes to a well-known superstition among the young Hindoo girls. They make a little boat out of a cocoa-nut shell, place a small lamp and flowers within this tiny ark of the heart, and launch it upon the Ganges. If it float out of sight with its lamp still burning, the omen is prosperous; if it sinks, the love of which it questions, is ill-fated.

Float on—float on—thy shining lamp,
The light of love, is there;
If lost beneath the waters damp,
That love must then despair.

Float on—beneath the moonlight float
The sacred billows o'er:
Ah, some kind spirit guards my boat,
For it has gained the shore.

SHE SAT ALONE BESIDE HER HEARTH.

She sat alone beside her hearth—
For many nights alone;
She slept not on the pleasant couch
Where fragrant herbs were strown.

At first she bound her raven hair
With feather and with shell;
But then she hoped; at length, like night,
Around her neck it fell.

They saw her wandering mid the woods,
Lone, with the cheerless dawn,
And then they said, "Can this be her
We called 'The Startled Fawn?'"

Her heart was in her large sad eyes,
Half sunshine and half shade;
And love, as love first springs to life,
Of every thing afraid.

The red leaf far more heavily
Fell down to autumn earth,
Than her light feet, which seemed to move
To music and to mirth.

With the light feet of early youth,
What hopes and joys depart,
Ah! nothing like the heavy step
Betrays the heavy heart.

It is a usual history
That Indian girl could tell;
Fate sets apart one common doom
For all who love too well.

The proud—the shy—the sensitive,—
Life has not many such;
They dearly buy their happiness,
By feeling it too much.

A stranger to her forest home,
That fair young stranger came;
They raised for him the funeral song—
For him the funeral flame.

Love sprang from pity,—and her arms
Around his arms she threw;
She told her father, "If he dies,
Your daughter dieth too."

For her sweet sake they set him free—
He lingered at her side;
And many a native song yet tells
Of that pale stranger's bride.

Two years have passed—how much two years
Have taken in their flight!
They've taken from the lip its smile,
And from the eye its light.

Poor child! she was a child in years—
So timid and so young;
With what a fond and earnest faith
To desperate hope she clung!

His eyes grew cold—his voice grew strange—
They only grew more dear.
She served him meekly, anxiously,
With love—half faith—half fear.

And can a fond and faithful heart
Be worthless in those eyes
For which it beats?—Ah! wo to those
Who such a heart despise.

Poor child! what lonely days she passed,
With nothing to recall
But bitter taunts, and careless words,
And looks more cold than all.

Alas! for love, that sits at home,
Forsaken, and yet fond;
The grief that sits beside the hearth—
Life has no grief beyond.

He left her, but she followed him—
She thought he could not bear,
When she had left her home for him,
To look on her despair.

Adown the strange and mighty stream
She took her lonely way;
The stars at night her pilots were,
As was the sun by day.

Yet mournfully—how mournfully!—
The Indian looked behind,
When the last sound of voice or step
Died on the midnight wind,

Yet still adown the gloomy stream
She plied her weary oar;
Her husband—he had left their home,
And it was home no more.

She found him—but she found in vain—
He spurned her from his side;
He said, her brow was all too dark,
For her to be his bride.

She grasped his hands,—her own were cold,-
And silent turned away,
As she had not a tear to shed,
And not a word to say.

And pale as death she reached her boat,
And guided it along;
With broken voice she strove to raise
A melancholy song.

None watched the lonely Indian girl,—
She passed unmarked of all,
Until they saw her slight canoe
Approach the mighty Fall!

Upright, within that slender boat
They saw the pale girl stand,
Her dark hair streaming far behind—
Upraised her desperate hand.

The air is filled with shriek and shout--
They call, but call in vain;
The boat amid the waters dash'd—
'Twas never seen again!

THE RUSH-BEARING AT AMBLESIDE.

SUMMER is come, with her leaves and her flowers—
Summer is come, with the sun on her hours;
The lark in the clouds, and the thrush on the bough,
And the dove in the thicket, make melody now.
The noon is abroad, but the shadows are cool
Where the green rushes grow in the dark forest pool.

In the olden time, when the churches were strewn with rushes, the ceremony of changing them was a yearly religious festival. The custom, once universal, now lingers only in some of the remote northern districts. There, bunches of rushes, gaily ornamented, attended by banners and music, are still borne in triumph by the young people of the village. Last remains of that pastoral poetry which once characterised "merrie England."

We seek not the hedges where violets blow,
There alone in the twilight of ev'ning we go;
They are love-tokens offered, when heavy with dew,
To a lip yet more fragrant—an eye yet more blue.
But leave them alone to their summer-soft dream—
We seek the green rushes that grow by the stream.

Away from the meadow, although the long grass
Be filled with young flowers that smile as we pass;
Where the bird's eye is bright as the sapphires that shine
When the hand of a beauty is decked from the mine.
We want not their gems, and we want not their flowers.
But we seek the green rush in the dark forest bowers.

The cowslip is ringing its fairy-like chime,
Sweet bells, by whose music Titania keeps time;
The rose-bush is covered with cups that unfold
Their petals that tremble in delicate gold.
But we seek not their blossoms in garlands to blend,
We seek the green rush where the willow-trees bend.

The green rush, the green rush, we bear it along
To the church of our village with triumph and song;
We strew the cold chancel, and kneel on it there,
While its fresh odours rise with our voices in prayer.
Hark the peal from the old tower in praise of it rings,
Let us seek the green rush by the deep woodland springs.

ON AN ENGRAVING OF

HINDOO TEMPLES.

LITTLE the present careth for the past,
Too little —'tis not well!
For careless ones we dwell
Beneath the mighty shadow it has cast.

Its blessings are around our daily path,
We share its mighty spoil,
We live on its great toil,
And yet how little gratitude it hath.

Look on these temples, they were as a shrine
From whence to the far north
The human mind went forth,
The moral sunshine of a world divine—

That inward world which maketh of our clay
Its temporary home;
From whence those lightnings come,
That kindle from a far and better day.

The light that is of heaven shone there the first
The elements of art,
Mankind's diviner part;
There was young science in its cradle nurst.

Mighty the legacies by mind bequeathed,
For glorious were its pains
Amid those giant fanes,
And mighty were the triumphs it achieved

A woman's triumph[a] mid them is imprest
One who upon the scroll
Flung the creative soul,
Disdainful of life's flowers and of its rest.

Vast was the labour, vast the enterprise,
For she was of a race
Born to the lowest place,
Earth-insects, lacking wings whereon to rise

How must that youthful cheek have lost its bloom,
How many a dream above
Of early hope and love
Must that young heart have closed on like a tomb.

[a] When I speak of a "a woman's triumph," I allude to the celebrated Avyia. She was a Pariah of the lowest class, but obtained such literary distinction, that her works are to this day the class-books of the scholars of the highest rank and caste in all the Hindoo schools of the peninsula of India.

Such throw life's flowers behind them, and aspire
To ask the stars their lore
And from each ancient store
Seek food to stay the mind's consuming fire.

Her triumph was complete and long, the chords
She struck are yet alive;
Not vainly did she strive
To leave her soul immortal on her words.

A great example has she left behind,
A lesson we should take,
Whose first task is to wake
The general wish to benefit our kind.

Our sword has swept o'er India; there remains
A nobler conquest far,
The mind's ethereal war,
That but subdues to civilize its plains.

Let us pay back the past, the debt we owe,
Let us around dispense
Light, hope, intelligence,
Till blessings track our steps where'er we go.

O England, thine be the deliverer's meed,
Be thy great empire known
By hearts made all thine own,
By thy free laws and thy immortal creed.

CAFÉS IN DAMASCUS.

LANGUIDLY the night-wind bloweth
From the gardens round,
Where the clear Barrada floweth
With a lulling sound.

Not the lute-note's sweet shiver
Can such music find,
As is on a wandering river,
On a wandering wind.

The Cafés are perhaps the greatest luxury that a stranger can find in Damascus. Gardens, kiosques, fountains, and groves are abundant around every Eastern capital; but Cafés on the very bosom of a rapid river, and bathed by its waves, are peculiar to this ancient city: they are formed so as to exclude the rays of the sun while they admit the breeze.

There the Moslem leaneth, dreaming
O'er the inward world,
While around the fragrant steaming
Of the smoke is curled.

Rising from the coffee berry,
Dark grape of the South;
Or the pipe of polished cherry,
With its amber mouth.

Cooled by passing through the water,
Gurgling as it flows—
Scented by the Summer's daughter,
June's impassioned rose.

By that rose's spirit haunted
Are the dreams that rise,
Of far lands, and lives enchanted,
And of deep black eyes.

Thus with some sweet dream's assistance,
Float they down life's stream ;
Would to heaven our whole existence
Could be such a dream !

ON THE PORTRAIT OF

SIR ROBERT PEEL.

Dim through the curtains came the purple twilight slowly,
Deepening like death's shadow around that silent room;
There lay a head, a radiant head, but lowly,
And the pale face like a statue shone out amid the gloom.

Never again will those white and wasted fingers
Waken the music they were wont to wake of yore,
A music that in many a beating heart yet lingers,
The sweeter and the sadder that she will breathe no more.

Mrs. Heman's last hours were cheered by the kindness of Sir Robert Peel; and the letter promising an appointment to her eldest son, was one of the latest that she received. This incident belongs to the many who look back with admiration and gratitude to the gifted and the gone.

It is a lovely world that the minstrel leaves behind him,
It is a lovely world in which the minstrel lives,
Deep in its inmost life hath the soul of love inshrined him,
And passionate and general the pleasure which he gives.
But dear-bought is the triumph, what dark fates are recorded
Of those who held sweet mastery o'er the pulses of the lute,
Mournfully and bitterly their toil has been rewarded,
For them the tree of knowledge puts forth its harshest fruit.
Glorious and stately the ever-growing laurel,
Flinging back the summer sunshine, defying winter's snow,
Yet its bright history has the darkly-pointed moral,
Deadly are the poisons that through its green leaves flow.
And she, around whose couch the gentle daylight dying,
Seems like all nature's loving, last farewell;
She with the world's heart to her own soft one replying.
How much of song's fever and sorrow could she tell.

Yet upon her lip a languid smile is shining,
Tokens of far-off sympathy have soothed that hour of pain;
Its sympathy has warmed the pallid cheek reclining
On the weary pillow whence it will not rise again.

It is the far-off friend, the unknown she is blessing,
The statesman who has paused upon toil's hurried way,
To learn the deepest charm that power has in possessing,
The power to scatter benefits and blessings round its sway.

ON READING A DESCRIPTION OF

THE DELECTABLE MOUNTAINS

IN BUNYAN'S PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.

Oh far away ye are, ye lovely hills,
Yet can I feel the air
Grow sweet while gazing where
The valley with the distant sunshine fills.
Fair Morning! lend thy wings, and let me fly
To thy eternal home,
Where never shadows come,
Where tears are wiped away from every eye.
I'm weary, weary of this earth of ours;
I'm sick with the heart's want;
My fever'd spirits pant,
To cling to things less transient than its flowers.

I ask of the still night—it answers me,
This earth is not my home:
Great Father! let me come,
A wanderer and a penitent to Thee!
Ye far, fair mountains, echo with my cry.
Unto your realm of bliss
The grave the threshold is;
Let its dark portals open—let me die!

CEMETERY OF THE SMOLENSKO CHURCH.

THEY gather, with the summer in their hands,
The summer from their distant vallies bringing;
They gather round the church in pious bands,
With funeral array, and solemn singing.

The dead are their companions; many days
Have past since they were laid to their last slumber;
And in the hurry of life's crowded ways,
Small space has been for memory to cumber.
But now the past comes back again, and death

A curious ceremony takes place yearly, when the Russians gather from all parts, to scatter flowers on the graves, and to mourn over the dead, and afterwards proceed to regale themselves with soup, fruit of all kinds, and wine; in many instances spreading their cloths on the very graves over which they have been bitterly mourning.

Asketh its mournful tribute of the living;
And memories that were garnered at the heart,
The treasures kept from busier hours are giving.
The mother kneeleth at a little tomb,
And sees one sweet face shining from beneath it;
She has brought all the early flowers that bloom,
In the small garden round their home, to wreath it.
Friend thinks on friend; and youth comes back again
To that one moment of awakened feeling;
And prayers, such prayers as never rise in vain,
Call down the heaven to which they are appealing.
It is a superstitious rite and old,
Yet having with all higher things connexion;
Prayers, tears, redeem a world so harsh and cold,
The future has its hope, the past its deep affection.

EXPECTATION.

She looked from out the window
With long and asking gaze,
From the gold clear light of morning
To the twilight's purple haze.
Cold and pale the planets shone,
Still the girl kept gazing on.
From her white and weary forehead
Droopeth the dark hair,
Heavy with the dews of evening,
Heavier with her care;
Falling as the shadows fall,
Till flung round her like a pall.

When from the carved lattice
First she leant to look,
Her bright face was written
Like some pleasant book ;
Her warm cheek the red air quaffed,
And her eyes looked out and laughed.
She is leaning back now languid
And her cheek is white,
Only on the drooping eyelash
Glistens tearful light.
Colour, sunshine hours are gone,
Yet the Lady watches on.

Human heart this history
Is thy fated lot,
Even such thy watching
For what cometh not

Till with anxious waiting dull
Round thee fades the beautiful.
Still thou seekest on though weary,
  Seeking still in vain;
Daylight deepens into twilight,
  What has been thy gain?
Death and night are closing round,
All that thou hast sought unfound.

THE UNKNOWN GRAVE.

THERE is a little lonely grave
Which no one comes to see,
The foxglove and red orchis wave
Their welcome to the bee.
There never falls the morning sun,
It lies beneath the wall,
But there when weary day is done
The lights of sunset fall,
Flushing the warm and crimson air
As life and hope were present there.

There sleepeth one who left his heart
Behind him in his song;
Breathing of that diviner part
Which must to heaven belong.

The language of those spirit chords,
But to the poet known,
Youth, love, and hope yet use his words,
They seem to be his own:
And yet he has not left a name,
The poet died without his fame.

How many are the lovely lays
That haunt our English tongue,
Defrauded of their poet's praise
Forgotten he who sung.
Tradition only vaguely keeps
Sweet fancies round his tomb;
Its tears are what the wild flower weeps
Its record is that bloom;
Ah, surely Nature keeps with her
The memory of her worshipper.

One of her loveliest mysteries
Such spirit blends at last
With all the fairy fantasies
Which o'er some scenes are cast.
A softer beauty fills the grove,
A light is in the grass,
A deeper sense of truth and love
Comes o'er us as we pass;
While lingers in the heart one line,
The nameless poet hath a shrine.

THE WOODLAND BROOK.

Thou art flowing, thou art flowing,
Oh, small and silvery brook;
The rushes by thee growing,
And with a patient look
The pale narcissus o'er thee bends,
Like one who asks in vain for friends.

I bring not back my childhood,
Sweet comrade of its hours;
The music of the wild wood,
The colour of the flowers;
They do not bring again the dream
That haunted me beside thy stream.

When black-lettered old romances
Made a world for me alone;

Oh, days of lovely fancies,
Are ye for ever flown?
Ye are fled, sweet, vague, and vain,
So I cannot dream again.

I have left a feverish pillow
For thy soothing song;
Alas, each fairy billow
An image bears along;
Look where I will, I only see
One face too much beloved by me.

In vain my heart remembers
What pleasure used to be
My past thoughts are but embers
Consumed by love for thee.
I wish to love thee less—and feel
A deeper fondness o'er me steal.

THE CHURCH AT POLIGNAC.

Kneel down in yon chapel, but only one prayer
Should awaken the echoes its tall arches bear;
Pale mother, pray not for the child on the bed,
For the sake of the prisoner let matins be said;
Old man, though the shade of thy grave-stone be nigh,
Yet not for thyself raise thy voice to the sky;
Young maiden, there kneeling, with blush and with tear,
Name not the one name to thy spirit most dear.
The prayer for another, to Heaven addrest,
Comes back to the breather thrice blessing and blest.

Beside the damp marsh, rising sickly and cold,
Stand the bleak and stern walls of the dark prison hold;
There fallen and friendless, forlorn and opprest,
Are they—once the flattered, obeyed, and carest,
From the blessings that God gives the poorest exiled,
His wife is a widow, an orphan his child;
For years there the prisoner has wearily pined,
Apart from his country, apart from his kind;
Amid millions of freemen, one last lonely slave,
He knoweth the gloom, not the peace of the grave.

I plead not their errors, my heart's in the cause,
Which bows down the sword with the strength of the laws;
But France, while within her such memories live,
With her triumphs around, can afford to forgive.
Let Freedom, while raising her glorious brow,
Shake the tears from her laurels that darken there now.

Be the chain and the bar from yon prison removed,
Give the children their parent, the wife her beloved.
By the heart of the many is pardon assigned,
For, Mercy, thy cause is the cause of mankind.

Written at the time Prince Polignac, &c. were suffering imprisonment after the Revolution in France, of 1830.

THE SPANISH PAGE,

OR, THE CITY'S RANSOM.

She was a chieftain's daughter, and he a captive boy,
Yet playmates and companions they shared each childish joy;
Their dark hair often mingled, they wandered hand in hand,
But at last the golden ransom restored him to his land.
A lovely town is Seville amid the summer air,
But, though it be a little town, Xenilla is as fair;
Fair are the glittering minarets where the purple daylight falls,
And rosy the pomegranates of the gardens in its walls.

But its pleasant days are over, for an army girds it round,
With the banner of the red cross, and the Christian trumpets sound;
They have sworn to raze the city that in the sunshine stood,
And its silvery singing fountains shall flow with Moslem blood.
Fierce is the Christian leader, a young and orphan lord,
For all the nobles of his house fell by the Moorish sword;
Himself was once a captive, till redeemed by Spanish gold,
Now to be paid by Moorish wealth and life an hundred-fold.

The sound of war and weeping reached where a maiden lay,
Fading as fades the loveliest, too soon from earth away,
Dark fell the silken curtains, and still the court below,
But the maiden's dream of childhood was disturbed by wail and wo.

She questioned of the tumult; her pale slaves told the cause;
The colour mounted to her cheek, a hasty breath she draws,
She called her friends around her, she whispered soft and low,
Like music from a wind-touched lute her languid accents flow.

Again upon her crimson couch she laid her weary head;
They looked upon the dark-eyed maid—they looked upon the dead.
That evening, ere the sunset grew red above the town,
A funeral train upon the hills came winding slowly down;
They come with mournful chanting, they bear the dead along,
The sentinels stood still to hear that melancholy song:

To Don Henrique they bore the corpse—they laid it at his feet,
Pale grew the youthful warrior that pale sweet face to meet.

As if in quiet slumber the Moorish maid was laid,
And her white hands were folded, as if in death she prayed;
Her long black hair on either side was parted on her brow,
And her cold cheek was colder than marble or than snow.
Yet lovelier than a living thing she met the warrior's gaze,
Around her was the memory of many happy days.
He knew his young companion, though long dark years had flown,
Well had she kept her childish faith—she was in death his own.

"Bring ye this here, a ransom for those devoted walls!"
None answered—but around the tent a deeper silence falls;

None knew the maiden's meaning, save he who bent above,
Ah! only love can read within the hidden heart of love.
There came from these white silent lips more eloquence
than breath,
The tenderness of childhood—the sanctity of death.
He felt their old familiar love had ties he could not break,
The warrior spared the Moorish town, for that dead
maiden's sake.

ITHACA.

By another light surrounded
Than our actual sky;
With the purple ocean bounded
Does the island lie,
Like a dream of the old world.
Bare the rugged heights ascending,
Bring to mind the past,
When the weary voyage ending,
Was the anchor cast.
And the stranger sails were furled
Beside the glorious island
Where Ulysses was the king.

Still does fancy see the palace,
With its carved gates;
Where the suitors drained the chalice,
Mocking at the Fates.
Stern, and dark, and veiled are they.

Still their silent thread entwining
Of our wretched life;
With their cold pale hands combining
Hate, and fear, and strife.
Hovers the avenging day
O'er the glorious island
Where Ulysses was the king.

Grant my fancy pardon,
If amid these trees
Still it sees the garden
Of old Laertes,
Where he met his glorious son.
The apple-boughs were drooping
Beneath their rosy fruit,
And the rich brown pears were stooping
To the old man at their foot,
While his daily task was done
In the glorious island,
Where Ulysses was the king;

'Tis a vain and cold invention,
'Tis the spirit's wrong,
Which to some small mind's pretension
Would subdue that song,
Shrined in manhood's general heart.
One almighty mind—one only
Could such strain have sung;
Ever be the laurel lonely,
Where such lyre is hung.
Be the world a thing apart,
Of the glorious island,
Where Ulysses was the king

SCENE DURING THE PLAGUE AT GIBRALTAR.

At first, I only buried one,
And she was borne along
By kindred mourners to her grave,
With sacred rite and song.
At first they sent for me to pray
Beside the bed of death:
They blessed their household, and they breathed
Prayer in their latest breath.
But then men died more rapidly—
They had not time to pray;

And from the pillow love had smoothed
Fear fled in haste away.
And then there came the fastened door—
Then came the guarded street—
Friends in the distance watched for friends;
Watched,—that they might not meet.
And Terror by the hearth stood cold,
And rent all natural ties,
And men, upon the bed of death
Met only stranger eyes:
The nurse—and guard, stern, harsh, and wan,
Remained, unpitying, by;
They had known so much wretchedness,
They did not fear to die.
Heavily rung the old church bells,
But no one came to prayer:
The weeds were growing in the street,
Silence and Fate were there.

O'er the first grave by which I stood,
Tears fell, and flowers were thrown,
The last grave held six hundred lives,[a]
And there I stood alone.

[a] A fact, mentioned to me by a clergyman, Mr. Howe, whose duty enforced residence during the ravages of the yellow fever.

THE EARL OF SANDWICH.

THEY called the Islands by his name,[a]
Those isles, the far-away and fair;
A graceful fancy linked with fame,
A flattery—such as poets share,

Who link with lovely things their praise,
And ask the earth, and ask the sky,
To colour with themselves their lays
And some associate grace supply.

[a] The Sandwich Islands were so called in honour of the Earl of Sandwich, then first lord of the Admiralty.

But here it was a sailor's thought,
That named the island from the Earl—
That dreams of England might be brought
To those soft shores, and seas of pearl.

How very fair they must have seemed
When first they darkened on the deep!
Like all the wandering seaman dreamed
When land rose lovely on his sleep.

How many dreams they turned to truth
When first they met the sailor's eyes;
Green with the sweet earth's southern youth,
And azure with her southern skies.

And yet our English thought beguiles
The mariner where'er he roam.
He looks upon the new-found isles,
And calls them by some name of home.

FELICIA HEMANS.

No more, no more—oh, never more returning,
Will thy beloved presence gladden earth;
No more wilt thou with sad, yet anxious yearning
Cling to those hopes which have no mortal birth.
Thou art gone from us, and with thee departed,
How many lovely things have vanished too:
Deep thoughts that at thy will to being started,
And feelings, teaching us our own were true.
Thou hast been round us, like a viewless spirit,
Known only by the music on the air;
The leaf or flowers which thou hast named inherit
A beauty known but from thy breathing there:

For thou didst on them fling thy strong emotion,
The likeness from itself the fond heart gave;
As planets from afar look down on ocean,
And give their own sweet image to the wave.

And thou didst bring from foreign lands their treasures,
As floats thy various melody along;
We know the softness of Italian measures,
And the grave cadence of Castilian song.
A general bond of union is the poet,
By its immortal verse is language known,
And for the sake of song do others know it—
One glorious poet makes the world his own.
And thou—how far thy gentle sway extended!
The heart's sweet empire over land and sea;
Many a stranger and far flower was blended
In the soft wreath that glory bound for thee.

The echoes of the Susquehanna's waters
Paused in the pine-woods words of thine to hear;
And to the wide Atlantic's younger daughters
Thy name was lovely, and thy song was dear.

Was not this purchased all too dearly?—never
Can fame atone for all that fame hath cost.
We see the goal, but know not the endeavour,
Nor what fond hopes have on the way been lost.
What do we know of the unquiet pillow,
By the worn cheek and tearful eyelid prest,
When thoughts chase thoughts, like the tumultuous billow,
Whose very light and foam reveals unrest?
We say, the song is sorrowful, but know not
What may have left that sorrow on the song;
However mournful words may be, they show not
The whole extent of wretchedness and wrong

They cannot paint the long sad hours, passed only
In vain regrets o'er what we feel we are.
Alas! the kingdom of the lute is lonely—
Cold is the worship coming from afar.

Yet what is mind in woman, but revealing
In sweet clear light the hidden world below,
By quicker fancies and a keener feeling
Than those around, the cold and careless, know?
What is to feed such feeling, but to culture
A soil whence pain will never more depart?
The fable of Prometheus and the vulture
Reveals the poet's and the woman's heart.
Unkindly are they judged—unkindly treated—
By careless tongues and by ungenerous words;
While cruel sneer, and hard reproach, repeated,
Jar the fine music of the spirit's chords.

Wert thou not weary—thou whose soothing numbers
Gave other lips the joy thine own had not?
Didst thou not welcome thankfully the slumbers
Which closed around thy mourning human lot?

What on this earth could answer thy requiring,
For earnest faith—for love, the deep and true,
The beautiful, which was thy soul's desiring,
But only from thyself its being drew.
How is the warm and loving heart requited
In this harsh world, where it awhile must dwell.
Its best affections wronged, betrayed, and slighted—
Such is the doom of those who love too well.
Better the weary dove should close its pinion,
Fold up its golden wings and be at peace;
Enter, O ladye, that serene dominion
Where earthly cares and earthly sorrows cease.

Fame's troubled hour has cleared, and now replying,
A thousand hearts their music ask of thine.
Sleep with a light, the lovely and undying
Around thy grave—a grave which is a shrine.

THE KINGS OF GOLCONDA.

MORNING is round the shining palace,
  Mirrored on the tide,
Where the lily lifts her chalice,
  With its gold inside,
    Like an offering from the waves.
Early wakened from their slumbers,
  Stand the glittering ranks;
Who is there shall count the numbers
  On the river's banks?
    Forth the household pours the slaves
    Of the kings of fair Golconda,
    Of Golconda's ancient kings.

Wherefore to the crimson morning
Are the banners spread,
Daybreak's early colours scorning
With a livelier red?
Pearls are wrought on each silk fold.
Summer flowers are flung to wither
On the common way.
Is some royal bride brought hither
With this festival array,
To the city's mountain-hold
Of the kings of old Golconda,
Of Golconda's ancient kings?

From the gates the slow procession,
Troops and nobles come.
This hour takes the king possession
Of an ancient home—
One he never leaves again.

Musk and sandal-wood and amber
Fling around their breath:
They will fill the murky chamber
Where the bride is Death.
Where the worm hath sole domain
O'er the kings of old Golconda,
O'er Golconda's ancient kings.

Now the monarch must surrender
All his golden state,
Yet the mockeries of splendour
On the pageant wait
That attends him to the tomb.
Music on the air is swelling,
'Tis the funeral song,
As to his ancestral dwelling,
Is he borne along.

They must share life's common doom.
The kings of fair Golconda,
Golconda's ancient kings.

What are now the chiefs that gather?
What their diamond mines?
What the heron's snowy feather
On their crest that shines?
What their valleys of the rose?
For another is their glory,
And their state, and gold;
They are a forgotten story,
Faint and feebly told—
Breaking not the still repose
Of the kings of fair Golconda,
Of Golconda's ancient kings.

Glorious is their place of sleeping,
Gold with azure wrought,

And embroidered silk is sweeping,
Silk from Persia brought,
Round the carved marble walls.[a]
Not the less the night-owl's pinion
Stirs the dusky air,
Not the less is the dominion
Of the earth-worm there.
Not less deep the shadow falls
O'er the kings of fair Golconda,
O'er Golconda's ancient kings.

Not on such vain aids relying,
Can the human heart
Triumph o'er the dead and dying,
It must know its part
In the glorious hopes that wait

[a] Thevenot gives a splendid description of these tombs. In addition to their architectural decoration, they were hung with embroidered satin.

The bright openings of the portal,

Far beyond the sky—

Faith, whose promise is immortal,

Life, that cannot die.

These, and stronger than the state

Of the kings of fair Golconda,

Of Golconda's ancient kings.

TO MY BROTHER.

Do you recall the fancies of many years ago,
When the pulse danced those light measures that again it
cannot know?
Ah! we both of us are altered, and now we talk no more
Of all the old creations that haunted us of yore.

Then any favourite volume was a mine of long delight
From whence we took our future to fashion as we might.
We lived again its pages, we were its chiefs and kings,
As actual, but more pleasant, than what the day now brings.

It was an August evening, with sunset in the trees,
When home you brought his Voyages who found the fair
South Seas.
We read it till the sunset amid the boughs grew dim;
All other favourite heroes were nothing beside him.

For weeks he was our idol, we sailed with him at sea,
And the pond amid the willows the ocean seemed to be.
The water-lilies growing beneath the morning smile,
We called the South Sea islands, each flower a different isle.

No golden lot that fortune could draw for human life,
To us seemed like a sailor's, mid the storm and strife.
Our talk was of fair vessels that swept before the breeze,
And new-discovered countries amid the Southern Seas.

Within that lonely garden what happy hours went by,
While we fancied that around us spread foreign sea and sky.

Ah! the dreaming and the distant no longer haunt the mind
We leave, in leaving childhood, life's fairy-land behind.

There is not of that garden a single tree or flower;
They have ploughed its long green grasses, and cut down
the lime-tree bower,
Where are the Guelder roses, whose silver used to bring,
With the gold of the laburnums, their tribute to the Spring.

They have vanished with the childhood that with their
treasures played;
The life that cometh after dwells in a darker shade.
Yet the name of that sea-captain it cannot but recall
How much we loved his dangers, and how we mourned his
fall!

A RUINED CASTLE ON THE RHINE,

FORMERLY BELONGING TO THE TEMPLARS.

On the dark heights that overlook the Rhine,
Flinging long shadows on the watery plains,
Crowned with grey towers, and girdled by the vine,
How little of the warlike past remains!

The castle-walls are shattered, and wild flowers
Usurp the crimson banner's former sign.
Where are the haughty Templars and their powers?
Their forts are perished—but not so their shrine.

Like Memory veiled, Tradition sits and tells
Her twilight histories of the olden time.
How few the records of those craggy dells
But what recall some sorrow or some crime.

Of Europe's childhood was the feudal age,
When the world's sceptre was the sword; and power,
Unfit for human weakness, wrong, and rage,
Knew not that curb which waits a wiser hour.

Ill suited empire with a human hand,
Authority needs rule, restraint, and awe;
Order and peace spread gradual through the land,
And force submits to a diviner law.

A few great minds appear, and by their light
The many find their way; truth after truth
Rise starlike on the depths of moral night,
Though even now is knowledge in its youth.

Still as those ancient heights, which only bore
The iron harvest of the sword and spear,
Are now with purple vineyards covered o'er,
While corn-fields fill the fertile valleys near.

Our moral progress has a glorious scope,
Much has the past by thought and labour done;
Knowledge and Peace pursue the steps of Hope,
Whose noblest victories are yet unwon.

THE IONIAN CAPTIVE.

SADLY the captive o'er the flowers is bending,
While her soft eye with sudden sorrow fills;
They are not those that grew beneath her tending
In the green valley of her native hills.

There is the violet—not from the meadow
Where wandered carelessly her childish feet;
There is the rose—it grew not in the shadow
Of her old home—it cannot be so sweet.

And yet she loves them—for those flowers are bringing
Dreams of the home that she will see no more;
The languid perfumes are around her, flinging
What almost for the moment they restore.

She hears her mother's wheel that slowly turning
Murmur'd unceasingly the summer day;
And the same murmur when the pine-boughs burning
Told that the summer-hours had passed away.

She hears her young companions sadly singing
A song they loved—an old complaining tune;
Then comes a gayer sound—the laugh is ringing
Of the young children—hurrying in at noon.

By the dim myrtles, wandering with her sister,
They tell old stories, broken by the mirth
Of her young brother: alas! have they missed her,
She who was borne a captive from their hearth?

She starts—too present grows the actual sorrow,
By her own heart she knows what they have borne;
Young as she is, she shudders at to-morrow,
It can but find her prisoner and forlorn.

What are the glittering trifles that surround her—
What the rich shawl—and what the golden chain—
Would she could break the fetters that have bound her,
And see her household and her hills again!

THE CEDARS OF LEBANON.

Ye ancients of the earth, beneath whose shade
Swept the fierce banners of earth's mightiest kings,
When millions for a battle were arrayed,
And the sky darkened with the vulture's wings.

Long silence followed on the battle-cries;
First the bones whitened, then were seen no more;
The summer grasses sprang for summer skies,
And dim Tradition told no tales of yore.

The works of peace succeeded those first wars,
Men left the desert tents for marble walls;
Then rose the towers from whence they watched the stars,
And the vast wonders of their kingly halls.

And they are perished— those imperial towers
Read not amid the midnight stars their doom ;
The pomp and art of all their glorious hours
Lie hidden in the sands that are their tomb.

And ye, ancestral trees! are somewhat shorn
Of the first strength that marked earth's earlier clime,
But still ye stand, stately and tempest-worn,
To show how Nature triumphs over Time.

Much have ye witnessed —but yet more remains,
The mind's great empire is but just begun ;
The desart beauty of your distant plains,
Proclaim how much has yet been left undone.

Will not your giant columns yet behold
The world's old age, enlightened, calm, and free ;
More glorious than the glories known of old —
The spirit's placid rule o'er land and sea.

All that the past has taught is not in vain—
Wisdom is garnered up from centuries gone:
Love, Hope, and Mind prepare a nobler reign
Than ye have known—Cedars of Lebanon!

ON WORDSWORTH'S COTTAGE,

NEAR GRASMERE LAKE.

Not for the glory on their heads
Those stately hill-tops wear,
Although the summer sunset sheds
Its constant crimson there.
Not for the gleaming lights that break
The purple of the twilight lake,
Half dusky and half fair,
Does that sweet valley seem to be
A sacred place on earth to me.

The influence of a moral spell
Is found around the scene,
Giving new shadows to the dell,
New verdure to the green.
With every mountain-top is wrought
The presence of associate thought,
A music that has been;
Calling that loveliness to life,
With which the inward world is rife.

His home—our English poet's home—
Amid these hills is made;
Here, with the morning hath he come,
There, with the night delayed.
On all things is his memory cast,
For every place wherein he past,
Is with his mind arrayed,

That, wandering in a summer hour,
Asked wisdom of the leaf and flower.

Great poet, if I dare to throw
My homage at thy feet,
'Tis thankfulness for hours which thou
Hast made serene and sweet;
As wayfarers have insense thrown
Upon some mighty altar-stone
Unworthy, and yet meet,
The human spirit longs to prove
The truth of its uplooking love.

Until thy hand unlocked its store,
What glorious music slept!
Music that can be hushed no more
Was from our knowledge kept.

But the great Mother gave to thee
The poet's universal key,
And forth the fountains swept—
A gushing melody for ever,
The witness of thy high endeavour.

Rough is the road which we are sent,
Rough with long toil and pain;
And when upon the steep ascent,
A little way we gain,
Vexed with our own perpetual care,
Little we heed what sweet things are
Around our pathway blent;
With anxious steps we hurry on,
The very sense of pleasure gone.

But thou dost in this feverish dream
Awake a better mood,
With voices from the mountain stream,
With voices from the wood.

And with their music dost impart
Their freshness to the world-worn heart,
Whose fever is subdued
By memories sweet with other years,
By gentle hopes, and soothing tears.

A solemn creed is thine, and high,
Yet simple as a child,
Who looketh hopeful to yon sky
With eyes yet undefiled
By all the glitter and the glare
This life's deceits and follies wear,
Exalted, and yet mild,
Conscious of those diviner powers
Brought from a better world than ours.

Thou hast not chosen to rehearse
The old heroic themes;
Thou hast not given to thy verse
The heart's impassioned dreams.

Forth flows thy song as waters flow,
So bright above—so calm below,
  Wherein the heaven seems
Eternal as the golden shade
Its sunshine on the stream hath laid.

The glory which thy spirit hath
  Is round life's common things,
And flingeth round our common path,
  As from an angel's wings,
A light that is not of our sphere,
Yet lovelier for being here,
  Beneath whose presence springs
A beauty never mark'd before,
Yet once known, vanishing no more.

How often with the present sad,
  And weary with the past,
A sunny respite have we had,
  By but a chance look cast

Upon some word of thine that made
The sullenness forsake the shade,
Till shade itself was past:
For Hope divine, serene and strong,
Perpetual lives within thy song.

Eternal as the hills thy name,
Eternal as thy strain;
So long as ministers of Fame
Shall Love and Hope remain.
The crowded city in its streets,
The valley, in its green retreats,
Alike thy words retain.
What need hast thou of sculptured stone?-
Thy temple, is thy name alone.

THE GANGES.

On sweeps the mighty river—calmly flowing,
Through the eternal flowers,
That light the summer hours,
Year after year, perpetual in their blowing.

Over the myriad plains that current ranges,
Itself as clear and bright
As in its earliest light,
And yet the mirror of perpetual changes.

Here must have ceased the echo of those slaughters,
When stopped the onward jar
Of Macedonian war,
Whose murmur only reached thy ancient waters.

Yet have they reddened with the fierce outpouring
Of human blood and life,
When over kingly strife
The vulture on his fated wing was soaring.

How oft its watch, impatient of the morrow,
Hath mortal misery kept,
Beside thy banks, and wept,
Kissing thy quiet night-winds with their sorrow.

Yet thou art on thy course majestic keeping,
Unruffled by the breath
Of man's vain life or death,
Calm as the heaven upon thy bosom sleeping.

Still dost thou keep thy calm and onward motion,
Amid the ancient ranks
Of forests on thy banks,
Till thou hast gained thy home—the mighty ocean.

And thou dost scatter benefits around thee:
Thy silver current yields
Life to the green rice-fields,
That have like an enchanted girdle bound thee.

By thee are royal gardens, each possessing
A summer in its hues,
Which still thy wave renews,
Where'er thou flowest dost thou bear a blessing.

Such, O my country! should be thy advancing—
A glorious progress, known
As is that river's, shown
By the glad sunshine on its waters glancing.

So should thy moral light be onwards flowing—
So should its course be bound
By benefits around,
The blessings which itself hath known bestowing.

Faith, commerce, knowledge, laws—these should be springing
Where'er thy standard flies
Amid the azure skies,
Whose highest gifts that red-cross flag is bringing.

Already much for man has been effected;
The weak and poor man's cause
Is strengthened by the laws,
The equal right, born with us all, respected.

But much awaits, O England! thy redressing;
Thou hast no nobler guide
Than yon bright river's tide
Bear as that bears—where'er thou goest—blessing!

FAREWELL! OH MY BROTHER!

COME, up with the banner, and on with the sword,
My father's first born, of his castle is lord;
No knight, I will say, that e'er belted a brand,
Was ever more worthy of lady or land.

Ring the horns through the forest that girdles our hall,
Let the glades of the green oaks re-echo the call.
And many a morning with dew on the plain,
And the red sun, just rising, shall hear them again

Fill up the clear wine-cup that dances in light,
One name, and one only, shall crown it to-night:
'Tis the health of the young knight just come o'er the main,
He will cross it an Earl, if he cross it again.

Farewell! oh my brother; farewell! mine abode—
The hawk that I flew, the horse that I rode.
They are safe—I commend them, my brother, to thee.
But my white greyhound goes with me over the sea.

For a thousand white crowns I have mortgaged my land,
And fifty bold seamen await my command;
My letters of marque are now signed by the queen,
I hasten where Drake and where Raleigh have been.

Away to the south is the course that I hold,
If the sea has its storm—why the Spaniard has gold.
Afar in the distance I see its light shine,
And all is fair warfare that crosses the Line.

One last charge, my brother, you only may hear,
'Tis the hope to my soul the most deep, the most dear;
Be my Blanche to thy heart like a sister, in love;
I leave in thy shadow the nest of my dove.

No doubt of her truth, and no fear of her change,
Can darken my pathway where'er it may range;
My heart is my omen—I know, o'er the main,
I return to her side, and to England, again.

THE PROPHETESS.

In the deep silence of the midnight hours,
I call upon ye, oh ye viewless powers!
Before whose presence mortal daring cowers.

I have subdued ye to my own stern will,
I fear ye not; but I must shudder still,
Faint with the awful purpose ye fulfil.

Not for myself I call the æther-born,
They have no boon my being doth not scorn—
Wholly and bitterly am I forlorn.

Dearly is bought the empire of the mind;
It sitteth on a sullen throne, designed
To elevate and part it from its kind.

Long years my stricken soul has turned away
From the sweet dreams that round my childhood lay:
Would it still owned their false but lovely sway!

In the dark grave of unbelief they rest,
Worthless they were, and hollow, while possest.
I am alone—unblessing, and unblest!

Knowledge is with me—guest that once received
Love, hope, ambition, are no more believed;
And we disdain what formerly had grieved.

A few fair flowers around their colours fling,
But what does questioning their sources bring?
That from corruption and from death they spring.

'Tis thus with those sweet dreams which life begin,
We weary of them, and we look within:
What do we find? Guile, suffering, and sin.

I know my kind too well not to despise
The gilded sophistry that round it lies:
Hate, sorrow, falsehood—mocking their disguise.

Oh, thou old world! so full of guilt and cares,
So mean, so small—I marvel Heaven bears
Thy struggle, which the seeing almost shares.

Yet, mine ancestral city, for thy sake
A lingering interest on this earth I take;
In the dim midnight 'tis for thee I wake.

Softly the starlight falleth over fanes
That rise above thy myrtle-wooded plains,
Where summer hath her loveliest domains.

Beneath, the gardens spread their pleasant shade,
The lutes are hushed that twilight music made,
Sleep on the world her honey-spell hath laid.

Sweet come the winds that o'er these flower-beds rove,
I only breathe the perfumes that ye love.
Spirits! my incense summons ye above.

What of yon stately city, where are shrined
The warrior's and the poet's wreath combined—
All the high honours of the human mind!

Her walls are bright with colours, whose fine dyes
Embody shapes that seem from yonder skies,
And in her scrolls the world's deep wisdom lies.

What of her future?—Through the silvery smoke
I see the distant vision I invoke.
These glorious walls have bowed to time's dark yoke.

I see a plain of desert sand extend
Scattered with ruins, where the wild flowers bend,
And the green ivy, like a last sad friend.

Low are the marble columns on the sand,
The palm-trees that have grown among them stand
As if they mocked the fallen of the land.

Hence, ye dark Spirits! bear the dream away;
To-morrow but repeateth yesterday;
First, toil—then, desolation and decay.

Life has one vast stern likeness in its gloom,
We toil with hopes that must themselves consume—
The wide world round us is one mighty tomb.

THOMAS MORE, ESQ.

Moore's name is a history in itself. Is there a single reader of poetry, to whom "Lalla Rookh" and the "Irish Melodies" are not familiar as household words?

If Titania, just wakened from dreams which the rose,
Flung, coloured and fragrant, around her repose,
Yet, haunted by fancies, should ask for a song,
To bear the soft hours of the noontide along—

'Tis thy lute that should keep the bright fairy from sleeping,
The sea-shell had never such tones in its keeping;
Though in its pale chamber of pearl was the birth
Of the earliest music that breathed over earth.

The falling of fountains—the slight summer rain—
The voice of the dove, were less sweet than thy strain;
Till stirred with delight, would her exquisite wings
Beat time on the west wind, to echo thy strings.

But yet to the ear of the fairy, unknown
Were half the deep music that dwells in thy tone:
The patriot's hope, and the minstrel's despair,
To the human heart vibrate—their dwelling is there.

Thy song has its sunshine—perhaps to that sun
It owes half the loveliest wreaths it has won.
It still lofty hopes and sad thoughts has betrayed—
Where on earth is the sunshine that flingeth no shade?

Thou wert not "the wild wind"[a] that waked for a while
The music and murmur of "Erin's green isle;"
Ah! no: to thy country thy numbers first brought
The burst of strong feeling—the purpose and thought.

From Memnon's dark statue 'twas morning's glad light
That wakened the melody sleeping through night;
So the soul of thine island arose at thy line,
And to wish for her welfare is wishing for thine.

a " Dear harp of my country, in darkness I found thee,
The cold chain of silence had hung o'er thee long,
When proudly, my own island harp, I unbound thee,
And gave all thy chords to light, freedom, and song.
If the heart of the patriot, soldier, or lover,
Have throbbed at thy song, 'twas thy glory alone;
I was but as the wind passing heedlessly over—
And all the wild sweetness I waked was thine own."

TO THE

MEMORY OF A FAVOURITE CHILD,

THE DAUGHTER OF A FRIEND.

HER voice is on the haunted air,
  Her face is in the scene;
To me there is no other trace
  But where her steps have been.
Not with the passionate despair
  With which I turned from Heaven,
And asked how could it take again
  The treasure it had given;
Not with that earlier wild despair,
Now gaze I upon earth and air.

A meeker sorrow now subdues
The soul that looks above,
Soothed by the sanctity that dwells
Around departed love.
I do not grieve as once I grieved,
When by thy funeral stone
I flung me in my first despair,
And knew I was alone.
Gradual thy God has given me
To know this world was not for thee.

Thy angel-nature was not made
For struggle or for care;
Thou wert too gentle and too good
For Heaven long to spare.
Thou wert but sent a little while
To soothe and to sustain;

The angels missed thee from their band
And asked for thee again:
But not till thou hadst given birth
To many a holy thought on earth.

Thy influence is with me still,
My own beloved child;
For thy sake hath my spirit grown
Calm — hopeful — strong, yet mild.
I look to heaven as to thy home,
And feel that there must be —
So deep the tie that draws me there —
Some lowly place for me.
The faith that springeth from the tomb
Nor mortal fears nor doubts consume.

I think upon thy early years
Not as I used to think,

With bitterness and vain regret,
And hopes that sprang to shrink,
But with a solemn fond belief
That we shall meet again:
Thy piety — thy sweet content —
Could never be in vain;
Taken alike wert thou, and given,
To win thy kindred unto heaven.

It was the lovely autumn time
When hither thou wert brought;
Not for the lovely scenes around,
But for thy health we sought.
For there was in thy large blue eyes
Too beautiful a light,
And on thy young transparent cheek
The rose was over-bright;
And the clear temples showed too plain
The branching of each azure vein

Too soon we saw it was in vain
That we had brought thee here:
For every day thou wert more weak,
And every day more dear.
Thy hand—how white and small that hand!
Could scarcely hold the flowers
Which yet were brought thee, with the dew
Of early morning hours.
I seem to look upon them now
Yet, where are they?—and where art thou?—

Where art thou?—if I dare to ask,
'Tis more with hope than fear;
In every high and tender thought
I seem to feel thee near.
I gaze upon the silent stars,
While lone and still they shine,

As each one were a spirit's home,
And ask, Which home is thine?
I feel as if thy tranquil eyes
Were watching earth from yonder skies.

God bless thee! my beloved child,
As thou hast blessed me;
Faith, hope, and love, beyond the grave
Have been thy gifts to me.
For thy sake dare I look above,
For thy sake wait below,
Trusting with humble confidence,
And patient in my wo.
To me thy early grave appears
An altar for my prayers and tears.

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